

by

Leigh H. Irvine.

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DE WITT & SNELLING

AN AFFAIR
IN
THE SOUTH SEAS

A STORY OF ROMANTIC ADVENTURE

BY

LEIGH H. IRVINE

Sincerely
Leigh H. Irvine

12-25-'01

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TO

CERTAIN FRIENDS.

W. H. M., A. B., AND H. W. B.

HERE is a simple tale of adventure in the balmy South Seas,—a sort of romance of a dreamer adrift in sunny lands. I trust that enough of human interest has been woven into the story to carry you pleasantly to the far-away places described.

When you read of old Captain Swanson, and Hadley, and Doctor Saville, please remember that none of their imperfections are charged to you, since you have never seen a line of the story.

Your kind words, however, have encouraged me to carry this little romance to a conclusion, and, whether you shall like it, or whether it shall offend you, please look upon it as a modest token of friendship.

Thanks are due to MR. ARTHUR M. ALLEN, of the San Francisco *Chronicle*, for friendly services in certain nautical matters, though he is not to be blamed for departures from technical terminology.

The great kindness of my old friend J. V. can never be forgotten. No character in any story has a larger heart than that which beats in his breast.

I hope that W. D. C. will not be disappointed when he sees how far this effort has fallen short of his expectations. Time may yet enable the author to make amends for many shortcomings in this work.

L. H. I.

SAN FRANCISCO, November, 1900.

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OPPORTUNITY.

MASTER OF HUMAN DESTINIES AM I!
FAME, LOVE, AND FORTUNE ON MY FOOTSTEPS WAIT.
CITIES AND FIELDS I WALK; I PENETRATE
DESERTS AND SEAS REMOTE; AND, PASSING BY
HOVEL AND MART AND PALACE,—SOON OR LATE,—
I KNOCK, UNBIDDEN, ONCE AT EVERY GATE!
IF SLEEPING, WAKE; IF FEASTING, RISE BEFORE
I TURN AWAY. IT IS THE HOUR OF FATE,
AND THEY WHO FOLLOW ME REACH EVERY STATE
MORTALS DESIRE, AND CONQUER EVERY FOE
SAVE DEATH; BUT THOSE WHO DOUBT OR HESITATE,
CONDEMNED TO FAILURE, PENURY, AND WOE,
SEEK ME IN VAIN, AND USELESSLY IMPLORE,
I ANSWER NOT, AND I RETURN—NO MORE!

JOHN J. INGALLS, *in Saturday Evening Post.*

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An Affair in the South Seas.

CHAPTER I.

SOUNDING FOR RECRUITS.

WHEN I saw Atollia first, I neither knew nor guessed how great a part it was to play in my life. The air was tropical, the sun bright, the sky ripe with the colors of afternoon. I had been for years in the fogs of San Francisco, struggling hard to succeed at the bar, and the outlook was discouraging. Here was a promising field of life; the prospect was wild and pleasing,—and the sight of a new world, after many weeks at sea, set my pulses leaping. The picture of that island is before me as I write; but I must elbow it aside until it is needed in the story I am about to tell.

I intend to give an account of certain thrilling adventures on the island of Atollia,

one of the most charming Edens of the South Seas, and to tell how it became peopled with white men, and ruled in a way that led to happiness; how the hopes and fears of a company of good people culminated in that far-away land.

My name is no great part of this story, but you should know it; so I write it here for your information,—I am Lee Hadley.

Throughout the year 1886 I was a briefless lawyer in San Francisco; my finances were low, my clients were few, and the outlook for an income that would supply my wants was discouraging. Despite the fact that a few large firms controlled the bulk of paying business, I held on bravely, hoping that I might make a strike on some lucky case. During those days of gloom I lived the half-starved life common to four or five hundred other lawyers around me, who earned a bare subsistence. It was often a battle to pay rent, and to make both ends meet; so I passed many days of melancholy idleness in the bleak and forbidding city of fogs.

The night of October 20, 1886, was stormy and terrifying. It was a time of high winds and heavy rainfall, and the sea was wild; the Federal life-saving crews were alert, and ships near the headlands were in peril for many hours,—never safe until they had made their offing, far beyond the thundering seas of the ragged coast. In the city, every swoop of the rising storm blew down signs, and the wind whistled in overhead wires, or dashed the rain in blinding torrents against windows and through doorways.

During this havoc of the elements I sat alone in my modest bachelor quarters in an humble hotel; reflected over many questions of individual destiny, in a mood the most gloomy; wondered, as I pondered alone and morose, how many fellow-creatures were that moment hungry and homeless,—and finally thanked God that things were no worse with me than I have told you.

Just as I was in this reverie of musing, three vigorous knocks at the door ended my dreaming, and Dr. Saville, an old friend, was

announced by the boy who ran the elevator and answered bells.

Now, Doctor Saville was a man of brains and education, a friend, the like of whom one meets but few times, even in a long life. Though eccentric to an unusual degree, he had a good heart, and he spent half his time treating the poor, without fee. Well, he dashed in with spirit, as was usual with him, and surely I never was happier to see a friend. He had force enough for ten people. Picture a tall, spare man, bubbling over with energy; a person of many schemes, but of small executive capacity. He was a good converser, and when the company was to his liking, he warmed one like a genial fire.

He led the conversation from the moment he entered the room. The storm, and its effect upon the poor, moved him deeply; and when he recounted certain scenes of the day, as he had witnessed them in administering to impoverished sufferers, his kind face took on a look of pain; there was anger in his tones,—and curses (the mellow,

musical swearing of an impulsive man) emphasized his utterances. As his imagination became inflamed, his heart went out to the neglected victims of poverty and disease. He denounced the civilization that left so many men, women, and little children unshod and unfed. These things struck him in their gloomiest phases, and he foretold bloodshed and chaos for the country that tolerated them.

"Why, I've seen little babes and their mothers dying for lack of warmth and food this very day," he exclaimed; "and I ask, what harvest such a civilization will reap, save a harvest of blood. Damn the trusts and monopolies!" he cried, in flaming wrath; and before I could calm him he had called down the vengeance of all the gods upon courts and legislatures and many other ancient institutions that lay at the very foundation of my profession. When he had cooled a little, I said,—

"Doctor, you're too tender-hearted, too much overcome by the suffering you see. You should reflect that the poor will be

with us always; that the world is better off to-day than it ever has been, in spite of the poverty around us."

"I challenge your statement," he exclaimed with impatience; "but even if you are right, I don't have to stay in this country and see this misery,—and I don't propose to stay much longer. There 's an escape at hand, and all wise men ought to go. Now, if you 're sensible, you 'll give up your grubbing life here, join my company, and make a hit."

"O Doctor! Doctor!" I exclaimed; "you 're still dreaming of the impossible; still building Utopias for the salvation of mankind. Tut, tut! there 's nothing but greater ruin at the end of all such dreaming."

"It 's no dream this time," he replied, "but I 'm going into a plain, common-sense proposition, where there 'll be enough for all. A business man of ripe years and large resources is at the head of the expedition, and success is at the end of it. Now, look at the bright side for once, and you 'll be

happy in the end. I can fix it so you can join the party and get out of this starving law business."

"I 'm ready to get into anything that assures a future," I said, half in earnest, half in politeness; "but I can't give up even my poor prospects on a gambling chance. If I leave here, it must be to embrace a certainty; for I 've decided to follow the old mining advice, 'Don't throw away dirty water until you 've got clean.'"

"That 's all right," he said; "and I can show you the very waters of life; yes, a paradise for a man of your age. Let me see, how old are you?"

"Thirty," I answered.

"Thirty, t-h-i-r-t-y," he pondered, fumbling over the pages of an insurance manual (such as doctors use) which he took from his vest pocket. "I 'll find your expectancy of life. At thirty, your sailing-chart calls for thirty-five years more. They 're soon gone — soon wasted — if the life is dull and useless, as most men's are in the bustling struggle of cities. Why, take my own life

for illustration! Here I am, at fifty, booked for less than twenty-one years, and it 's high time for me to be moving. But the man who 'll save us all is sixty-three,—and he has but twelve years to live, if he verifies the table."

Now here was a regular sermon, fired at me offhand, and listened to without interruption.

"You don't know Cap'n Swanson, do you?" he asked, continuing; "rich old fellow; was a lucky dog at sperm-whaling in the Solander belt; self-made man, and 's well made, every inch. You must know him. He 's got millions, and his head 's full of grand ideas about a colony for the uplifting of humanity; he 's got the spot picked out, and knows the South Seas as well as I know San Francisco; talks cannibal languages, and 's got a heart as tender as a child's; looks like Evangelist Moody, and 's just as good a man."

The Doctor brooked no interruption during his monologue, which he ended abruptly

on looking at his watch, and hurried away to see a patient.

"Think it over, and join us," he said, as he left; "for it's the chance of a lifetime to escape from drudgery and disappointment."

He was gone before I could ask any further questions; and I sat thinking over the odd visit of a queer visitor. It was not the first time the Doctor had come to me with plans of an earthly paradise, and I envied him for his large bump of hope.

When I went to bed that night I had no more idea of joining his company of colonists, than you have, this moment, of becoming a harpooner on a whaling-ship.

CHAPTER II.

A LATE CONFERENCE.

ABOUT a fortnight after the visit, Doctor Saville came to my office in high spirits; he said he had wound up his affairs, and had determined upon a cruise in tropical waters, where he felt that he would find a permanent home.

"Our plans are nearing completion," he said, "and there 's still a chance for you to join the company, if it 's your wish; so I suggest that you close your office for a six months' sea voyage; and when we get to our destination there 'll be no compulsion about staying. If you don't like the looks of things, you can return with the ship that we send back for more machinery and provisions."

I said I was willing to investigate the

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scheme, and that I might decide to join the expedition, confessing, at the same time, that he had aroused my curiosity.

"Then, if you 'll give me a few hours to-night," he replied, "I 'll take you to our meeting, and if you like our plans and the people you see, you can take the obligation that we all take, and join the company."

It was agreed that the Doctor should call for me at eight o'clock that night. He was on time, eager to take me to his friends. We got on a cable-car, which landed us by the moonlit waves of the Pacific in less than an hour. The surf was booming, the sea-lions were barking, and the air was full of noises of the sea as we entered the Seal Rock House, the place of conference.

I was led to Captain Swanson's rooms and introduced to the sturdy old man who was destined to change my career as much as if he had bought me at a slave market.

"This is my friend," said the Doctor, when we had come to the Captain's quarters, "who 's wasting his fine abilities in a struggle to succeed at the bar,—but I hope

he 'll give up the notion of spending his years chained to a desk."

"Young man, I am glad to meet you," said the old Captain; "you 've got a good face, and we need such men as you in this company."

"I 've come to learn more about your plans," I replied; "and I might like to go with you, on probation; but I 've little faith in any scheme to build an earthly paradise. You can't get golden conduct out of men of lead."

"Earthly paradise be damned!" exclaimed the old sea-dog; "what fool 's thinkin' of building an earthly paradise? Why, man, I 'm going to take these good people to one that 's already built,—not by men, but by God. You 've never been in the dreamy isles, I guess. Well, I reckon you 'll think you 're in the Better Land before you get back from where I take you. Right in here 's the secret directions to the place," said he, as he clapped his big, rough right hand over his heart; "and it 's a land of coral strands and virgin soil,—why, bless

you! a regular Garden of Eden, just waiting for good people to come and use it. Not much building about that, is there? Young man, trust the old Captain!"

This sounded like an honest speech, and no second glance was required to see that I was in the presence of a man of original character and strong impulses. I was about to ask him some details about the expedition, when our talk was broken up by the arrival of a crowd of colonists.

I saw that everybody was in deep earnest; some were dreamy socialists, full of theories for the reformation of the world,— but many seemed to be joining the colony either for an outing to the South Seas, or because things were so bad with them that there was little prospect of making them worse. Some were friends of the Captain (and possibly had been the recipients of "loans" never meant to be repaid), and I believe they would have followed him anywhere, so great was their faith in him.

There was a lawyer who had been a police judge until his health failed; his

frail physique, and frequent hints of coming dissolution, admonished him to seek health in some balmy climate, and he looked upon the Captain as a savior; he expected to live only a few years, at best,—and hardly any time at all, unless he could hurry into an atmosphere that would prove balm to his lungs. His name was William Davis.

But most of the men had an odor of the sea in their talk; they longed for the old life of travel, and welcomed the prospect of a voyage over the Pacific as much as if it were to be a trip to the fountain of childhood. They were living the happy days of youth over again.

I was introduced to an intelligent machinist,—John Randolph,—who said he was descended from the great Virginian of that name. He had been a sailor, but had become "a rusty old landsman," as he expressed it; but our proximity to the waves and the prospect of a voyage stimulated him like wine. A light came into his eyes when he looked out of the window upon

the throbbing sea, which trembled in a moonlit path to the west; and he longed for the mysteries of distant lands and the wonders of the summer ocean. I fancied that the plash of the waves and the singing of the surf in the caves of the cliff made him eager for the life of his boyhood; and he talked earnestly of the expedition.

"There are atolls in the sea, out yonder," he said; "and it 's everlasting June beyond the sunset, after you get into the dreamy belt, far from the scenes and noises of city life."

"And what are these atolls like?" I asked.

"Why, they 're coral islands," he said; "and are generally fringed with palms and beautified by natural lagoons, — and the natives live on cocoanuts and climate; if they want to trade with foreigners, they make their cocoanuts into copra, — and copra 's the same as money in the South Seas."

It was evident that Randolph would go with the party; that he was but one of a type that was numerous, — men with memories of the sea; some of them wind-stained

by recent voyaging. But there were many of a different type, as I learned by a little talking and listening,—students, teachers, ministers, and men moved by a desire to explore a new country. All were bent on bettering their condition, and there was a hopeful air about the whole party.

I was soon impressed that every man of them was anxious for the day of sailing, which, I judged, would not be delayed many weeks. Doctor Saville flitted here and there, like a leader at a singing-school. He had a word with this man or that, then a whispered consultation with Captain Swanson,—and he seemed to know every man's name, perhaps the private circumstances of each life; nor did a single detail appear to slip him during the hum of much talking by men separated into many groups. He was a sort of secretary of the company, carrying a book of names, each the autograph of the signer,—all subscribed under a brief agreement to join the expedition.

During this time I knew nothing more of the details of the proposed excursion

than I have set down; but I was told that matters would be explained very soon. It was about half-past nine o'clock when Captain Swanson rapped on the chairman's table with a heavy mallet (made of an elephant's tusk), at the same time crying, "Men, fall in!" with such volume and command of tone that I knew he had been long used to uttering commands. When the order rang out, every man awoke from his musings. Swanson led the way, and the entire party marched from the room to a much larger one, arranged like a hall for meetings,—but the furnishings were unique, even startling.

A strange feature of the larger room was its South Sea atmosphere, subtle and all-pervasive. There were hundreds of things of a type I never had seen before, accustomed as I was to San Francisco,—baleen and bones of whales, a stuffed man-eating shark of enormous size and striking naturalness, rare specimens of beautiful coral, the dried tentacles of devil-fish, and like wonders that I cannot describe here.

Along one side of the wall there was a glass case that contained the bleached skulls of human creatures; and suggestively close to these ruins of man's life lay cannibal clubs, powerful bows, and poisoned arrows, all encircled by rare beads that had been necklaces for savages. Hard by these the eye beheld hideous images of distorted creatures,—idols as ugly as the horrors of a nightmare, carvings of men dying in the clutch of serpents, and like productions of island carvers, and of artists of China and Japan.

It was explained that the Captain had collected everything in the room during his cruisings as the skipper of a sperm-whaler; but before I got further details we were rapped to order by Doctor Saville. Some fifty or sixty chairs were arranged in front of the desk, behind which sat Captain Swanson and the Doctor.

"Captain Swanson will explain our plans, for the benefit of prospective members," said Doctor Saville, after the half-hundred of us were quietly seated.

"Well, I 'll begin at the first, firstly," said the old Captain, as he stroked his short gray beard, his stout figure bulging over the little table, "and you men who don't know what 's in the wind will soon see it 's as simple as A, B, C. You don't want any balderdash, but plain facts; truth 's what counts. In the first place, I 'm getting along in years, as you can see, and I want to do some good, as well as have a good time, before I die; and secondly, I 've got more money than some folks have got hay, and I could n't live long enough to spend it decently in this country. I 've got neither chick nor child; all I ever had were buried out yonder in the deep, long years ago, — my wife, who died in the China seas twenty years past, and Billy, my boy, who was killed by a whale, — and some of you boys helped sew his canvas shroud and bury him in the ocean. And I 've been lonesome ever since I left that belt of sunny days; but perhaps that 's only an old man's childishness."

His voice faltered for a moment, and in

that hesitation was the revelation that he had sentiments of a high order,—call it heart, soul, or what you will.

"But I'll drop that talk," he said, "and say that I've got a secret spot picked out for those that love happy days and are willing to knock about a bit on the seas; it's not peopled by whites now, but it's a white man's country, just the same,—fine enough for angels. There 's room for a big colony of us; and what 's best of all is, that the people there are my friends,—or their parents were,—and some of the old Kanakas down near the line would have done anything Cap Swanson asked them to do, for he was always on the square with them, and helped them out of many a scrape. You see, it 's this way: I speak their language, and I know their ways; besides, I 'm not going there to rob 'em the way some of the missionaries have done, with a Bible in one hand and a flag in the other, and avarice and deceit in their hearts.

"Well, men, it 's a healthy country and

a balmy climate; and food grows there just the same as manna that the old preachers used to tell about when I was a boy, which they said fell from heaven to feed the Israelites in the wilderness. Now, men, we 'll go there, and help ourselves and help the natives at the same time, for they 're preyed upon by their enemies; but when we give their enemies a few whirls with machine-guns, I guess they 'll let our island alone.

"We can use the Kanakas in our fields, and treat them right for what they do; and if you give them a fair deal, they 'll die for you. So our plan is to go there and occupy the country with the copper-colored fellows. We 'll build grass houses (which are best for summer climates), and I guess the carpenters can fix us all right for the rainy seasons, which are not half-bad, anyhow.

"But the best point is, that I 'm not trying to make a cent off anybody. I 'll put up all the money, and when we get started we 'll live like one big family. There 'll be

none of the root of all evil down there, but we 'll dwell together like brothers. We 'll just dig and build, and make whatever we need, — or I 'll send the ship after it, — and, to put the whole thing in a nutshell, we 'll just start a little world of our own in a land that God created for a paradise, only he forgot to put white men there. We 'll build libraries, factories, or whatever we want, — and that 's the whole business, so far as I can see.

"Now, I 'll say to you men that have just joined, that you 'll get a fair deal all through. The good ship *Rosalie* lies over yonder in the harbor, and I own her. Her hold 'll be loaded fore and aft with the good things we need in our pioneering; I 've planned with other members of the company, and I tell you we 're not overlooking what 's good and useful. If you want to fall in, there 's no fee, except your pledge to be a man, and obey the laws which we agree on before we start. On the sea I 'll be the boss, just like any other skipper, for somebody must rule on the waves; and

who should rule the *Rosalie* but her owner, who 's proud of her from main truck to keelson ? But, once on the land, it 'll be for you men to decide as much as me."

At the end of his speech, the old man's eyes glistened expectantly as he extended an invitation to all who had not signed to come up and become members ; and about a dozen honest-looking fellows, mostly mechanics, signed the roll. It was a company of determined men, and I learned by inquiring that many had wives and children, who were to be carried to the colony on subsequent trips.

It was now late, and the company dispersed. Doctor Saville and I lingered a while for a talk with the old leader. We walked along the beach for an hour ; a silver moon rode in the west, lighting the restless waves and showing the foaming line that marked the breach of the surf. Face to face with Captain Swanson, I saw that he was a man of rugged countenance and great muscular power ; he stood nearly six feet, but his great weight gave an

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appearance more stocky than so great a height usually indicates. His discourse was earnest and business-like, though by no means profuse,—but it could not be called scanty. His heart was plainly bent on establishing a happy colony in the South Seas; and when he warmed to his subject, there was something inspiring in his words,—perhaps a note of confidence, born of strong character and of a thorough knowledge of the country he was to visit. He had the determined gray eyes of a warrior,—and none but a man of courage would have crossed him when anger aroused their fires. At his ripe age there was no surplus ebullition, as in Doctor Saville, who worked under a constant pressure of high spirits; but there was enough caloric to keep up an adequate supply of well-directed energy.

The best of it all was that something eminently reassuring beamed in the brusque Captain's glance; he left a pleasant feeling of confidence,—and I soon realized why so many who knew him described him as a man with "a good heart."

Before we parted I found myself much interested in the projected cruise, and the Doctor, slapping me familiarly on the back, said, "I think we 'll get you in yet, old man; for, the more you think this thing over, the better you 'll like it, and the more you 'll despise the treadmill you 're in."

"Hold a bit, Doctor," returned the Captain; "don't try to make the young man dissatisfied with his place in life; don't urge anybody to give up a position he likes, for he might regret it; but,"—and he turned to me,—"if you want to join us, I can promise you the finest cruise you ever took."

You see, there was something alluring about the whole business of these people, especially to a struggling lawyer, whose uncertain income had to be worked like a Chinese puzzle to make it cover current obligations. I had seen enough to make me want to know more, and I knew that the Doctor would keep me informed concerning the progress of the colonists.

"Come down to the Mission Wharf any

day," was the Captain's parting invitation, "and you 'll see our men loading the *Rosalie* for the voyage. If there 's a bit of the boy left in you, or a drop of sailor-blood in your veins, you 'll fall in love with her."

I promised to visit the water-front at an early date to see the old tars and colonists at work. On my way home there were pleasant sea-pictures in my mind, such as were awakened first when I read *Robinson Crusoe;* and I felt that my experiences with Captain Swanson and his party were beginning to warm up the leaven of childhood. By the time I had reached the busy streets of the city the spirit of boyhood was singularly aroused; but I was so tired that I camped in my office for the night, rather than make the long trip to my hotel. My blood was now in such a fever, and my imagination so aroused, that the folding-bed in the office looked like a cot in a prison, so cramped and narrow was the room, compared with the freedom I longed for.

That night I dreamt of plumy palms and

coral reefs; and when I awoke the sun was high, the office was stuffy with the smell of law books,—and a persistent rent-collector (who had made several previous demands, I confess) was hammering on my door, as if he thought I had determined to evade him. Hard are the trials of rent-collectors! harder those of many a young lawyer, in his struggles to get on in the world!

CHAPTER III.

ALONG THE WHARVES.

OF the conflicting thoughts that raged in my mind the entire day following my trip to the Seal Rock House, I cannot tell at length. There were bills to pay and disagreeable clients to deal with; over their affairs I exhausted my patience and lowered my energies, without materially increasing my store of money,—and finally a growing sense of dissatisfaction with my place in the world made me restless and sad.

I went to the Mission Wharf, the next day, to see the *Rosalie* and witness the spectacle of sailor-men and hopeful colonists getting ready for their sea trip. As I walked along the water-front and viewed the cosmopolitan company of deep-water vessels, I

realized for the first time the magnitude and variety of San Francisco's growing ocean commerce; the sight of great four-masted ships, ocean steamers, island schooners, brigs, tugs, barkentines, and many varieties of yachts and barges, revealed a pleasing glimpse of the sea trade; and when I heard old tars bawling their commands with voices like megaphones, and saw every fellow tugging manfully at his task, I contrasted their happy activity and primitive habits with my own life of melancholy waiting for clients; and the primal desire that drives men to action stirred me until I felt the throbbing of that spirit which has made the Anglo-Saxon a creature of deeds. I had not gone far before I was seized with a strange desire to exchange my Micawber habits for a life of action. In this thought I hastened to the dock, thrilled by the sight of every mast and sail in the harbor.

It was about eight o'clock when I reached the busy wharf, and the morning was glorious. Even old hulks took on a youthful

appearance, transformed by the freshness of the day. Every floating thing glistened in the mellow light, which gave glowing colors to the purple hills, the rising tide, and the handiwork of man; but of all the splendors of that scene, the handsomest single object was the very craft I had come to see,—a masterpiece gently rocking in the tide, bathed in the melting colors of an ideal morning. Rising majestically from the water, the *Rosalie* was a thing of impressive beauty. There was a figurehead at the prow,—a leaping fawn,—executed with much skill in the carving and coloring. The odor of youth permeated everything; yet in spite of the graceful lines of the vessel, she gave an impression of great strength. On the overhanging stern I read the words, "Built for Captain Swanson.—Liverpool, 1884." This showed that the craft had not been afloat more than two years, and her strong lines gave promise of long life and heroic service. Her hull was painted a rich sea-green, and above the water she was as white as polished

marble. Everything was as trim as good shipwrights could build, spick-and-span new, and apparently stanch enough to ride the wildest surge.

It was under these favorable circumstances that I first saw the good ship that was to carry me to a new heaven and a new earth, and while I mused she strained at her moorings, as if eager to plunge into deeper waters. The tides swayed her gently, and caused her blocks to whistle like the notes of a flute. Many tints of morning were blended in the mirror of the waves, and the sky was bright with changing hues. A few miles beyond, I saw the glint of flashing waters; and not far away, the mysteries of the sea were blended in the mystery of color, the autumn sky brooding over all. I stood in the eye of the morning in a restful spirit of admiration, with no more thought of the affairs of my law trade than you have, this moment, of old Lord Coke's pleadings. I felt the ground slipping from under my feet; the life I had led seemed something that belonged to a distant past, and I was seized

with a fever for cruising, that made me impatient. In this humor I gazed again and again upon Captain Swanson's pride; she lay there like a great sea-bird, ready to unfurl her white wings and sail away from the troubled world of commerce into the sunny isles of the Pacific.

The wharf swarmed with men in sea rigs; they wore comfortable negligee shirts and loose trousers of ducking, and some of them were regular old salts in appearance,— sunburnt men with calloused hands, which they carried half-closed, as if ready to haul away at ropes upon the slightest provocation; nimble seamen, here and there on the wide-spreading yards, tinkering with sailing gear, and making preparations to breast the depths and mysteries of the ocean world.

I stood for a long time in the shadow of a tugboat-house, drinking in the temptations of the scene, enjoying the panoramic water-front, and reveling in my new-found passion. The workers were loading the ship, and as they dodged in and out of alleyways of boxes and bales, I felt sure I was

not observed. I had not been at my viewpoint long when the sturdy Captain walked briskly across the deck and gave orders about the loading. He was the picture of a master,—a man born to command. By the very strength of superior knowledge of his business, and by voice, countenance, and physique, he was one to be heeded; and the first thing I heard him say showed his command of details.

"John," he called to Randolph, the machinist, "tell the men aft to be careful with those boxes of phonograph-cylinders; they should be taken in before the sun 's high."

I looked aft and saw a dozen men carrying boxes into the ship. Every one was labeled "PHONOGRAPH-CYLINDERS—TROPICAL WAX." There was no further inscription, and the packages were so numerous that they loomed ten or twelve feet above the barrels of beans, bags of rice, piles of bacon, and other substantial provisions on the wharf. There were about two hundred boxes of this character, and each was

large enough to hold ten or twelve ordinary phonograph-cylinders. It seemed a strange cargo; and the longer I watched the men carrying freight into the hold, the more puzzling the circumstance appeared; for what could strike one as more useless and unsuitable to a pioneer colony in the South Seas, than a supply of phonograph-cylinders that would stock the museums of New York City?

Though inclined to ask some of the men the purpose of the shipment, I curbed my tongue, but continued to walk among the bundles, and though many had surely seen me at the Seal Rock House, none appeared to remember me.

Hard by the boxes were a dozen or more strong crates, each labeled "EDISON'S ELECTRIC PHONOGRAPHS." And a little farther down the wharf was a larger one than any I had yet seen, marked "PHONOGRAPH TOOLS AND EQUIPMENTS." This mystery of the wharf grew as I watched the men lowering the odd cargo into the hold.

Without further loitering, I went aboard and inquired for Captain Swanson. He came forth with a hearty greeting, and I was shown to his stateroom, which was furnished as luxuriously as many a city drawing-room. There were some choice landscapes in water-colors, and the entire atmosphere of this home on the sea was cheerful.

"Have a cigar," said the Captain, as he opened a locker and drew out a box of rare Havanas; "and after you light up I'll take you for a whirl through the ship."

Then he led me to the cabin, showed me the stateroom, and explained the mysteries of the roundhouse and the binnacle. The cabins were elegantly furnished, and near them was a choice library, composed of scientific works, histories, books of fiction, and general literature.

"How 's this for a layout for the ship's surgeon?" he asked, as he opened a door and led into a treble-sized stateroom abounding in medical stores, surgical instruments, batteries, and like equipments,

the whole pervaded by the clean odor of antiseptics.

"This is the office of Dr. Saville; and here" (opening a door that led to a state-room),—"here is his home, which is not far from that of four other doctors; I think that 's a pretty good supply of physicians for a country where men never die till the machinery 's worn out."

Next we went into the hold, where some of the stores were pointed out. There were many improved agricultural implements, large quantities of seed and grain for planting, great piles of canned goods and desiccated vegetables, and thousands of pounds of sugar-cured bacon and ham, beans, rice, and other substantial foods. In a specially constructed compartment between decks the Captain showed me stalls for cattle, sheep, and hogs, and explained that some would be killed on the voyage, and others preserved for breeding on the island; these were to be brought aboard at the last moment before sailing.

"And here 's something else I want to

show you," he said, later, as he led me through a hatch in his stateroom to a more private part of the hold. "If there 's to be any trouble, we 're good and ready for any tribe that forgets its place." And he showed me six Maxim rapid-firing guns, also barrels of powder, piles of ammunition, hundreds of modern rifles, and two six-pounders of improved type.

"You must expect to have to fight your way," I remarked.

"Not a bit of it," he said; "but it 's with the copper ones just as 't is among the whites; the best way to have peace is to be ready for war. You never want to go among cannibals with a weak front, — but the chief thing 's to protect the people on our island from the ravages of other tribes."

"You must be about ready to clear, are n't you?" I asked.

"Well," said he, "we expect to be off about Thursday of next week, if we have good luck."

"And you still have room for me, if I should want to go?" I asked.

"Come right here, young man," he replied, as he showed me a spacious state-room, not far from Dr. Saville's office; "we 'll stow you in here, if you 'll come along. This is snug enough, is n't it?"

"And there 'll be a chance for me to come back, if I don't like the idea of staying?" I asked.

"Nothing 's easier," he replied; "for the *Rosalie* 's got several trips to make for stores and men's families, and it would be against the Golden Rule to keep anybody there, unless he felt like staying. Why, bless you, one unhappy soul would break up the whole colony, and I 'd spend all I 've got, rather than hold a man down there against his will."

I stood there weighing the question with singular emotions, glancing meanwhile over the railing into the restless waves. In imagination I could see the dreamy isles of the Pacific; the wonders of strange lands rose before me, with their deep wildwoods, their floral beauty, and their sunny seas flashing in eternal June; and I knew that the picture

had come to haunt me through all the years, if I refused the offer,—and on the impulse I said, "I 'll go, if I die for it! Give me your hand, Captain!" And I never have felt happier, in all the years since that eventful day, than when I hurried from the *Rosalie* to my musty law office, there to abandon the life I had known and struggled with, and to take up the threads with which I was to weave a new career.

CHAPTER IV.

OFF FOR THE DREAMY BELT.

I HAD a week in which to make preparations and say farewells to friends and business; and in the hurry and excitement of doing many things in a short time, the days were swift of wing.

No limit was placed on colonists' baggage, and there was no charge for anything that went aboard the *Rosalie;* so I supplied myself liberally with clothing for the tropics; stowed away a hundred or more volumes of choice books; sent my bicycle and typewriter into the hold, and provided such things as I thought would add to the pleasure of a long stay in a distant land. Knowing that there would be many idle hours aboard, I was careful to lay in plenty of violin-strings. My violin

(an heirloom in my mother's family) was as fondly cared for as if it had been a favorite child, and its mellow tones helped to fill many an hour with such melody as goes with music and moonlight nights in tropical seas. Imagine yourself in the moonshine of the quarter-deck, and you will get the outlines of a picture that was frequent. As you gaze into the vessel's wake and see the hollows of the sea lashed into singing foam that glistens far astern, a shining path will mark the course; above the plashing waves you will hear the soft notes of Schubert's *Serenade*, or the sweet pathos of the *Cavalleria Rusticana;* the mind, partaking of the witchery of the surroundings, will liken the course of the ship to man's voyage through the years, and fancy will invest the moonlight and the stars, the many voices of the sea, and the harmony that fills the air, with the charm of that land which the poets of all ages have placed among the stars.

Such pictures, with us, came gradually,

after we were well out of the fogs and cold gales of the North Pacific. But at the end of several weeks' contesting with high winds and boisterous waves, there was a marked difference in the clouds and climate, in the colorings of the sky, and in the waters and the creatures of the deep. You could not say just when the change happened; but the moment it came, it sweetened the hours, and was welcome to the cheek of care.

I remember that the first anxiety that pressed upon me in the voyage came when the moorings of the ship were cast off, at the outset; for there was a troubled spirit and a little taste of bitterness as we were drawn through the pulsing tide of the bay by the puffing tug *Vigilant*. A spirit of deep loneliness hovered for a time, especially at the moment of my last view of San Francisco, — and when the tug blew us a long farewell, there was a tinge of sadness over all.

I went below, my mind filled with strange musings. The first thing my eyes fell upon was a part of the ship given over to piles

of papier-mâché, which looked like wide boards; they were sections of ingeniously constructed houses, so made that the commonest Robinson Crusoe of a carpenter could find little difficulty in joining them into snug houses. It was with the comfort of a good fire and an extra coat that the sight of these embryonic homes thrilled me. Here was the right thing in the right place, which is one definition of wealth; so there was a delight in the thought that we had made provision against the teeth of animals and the nakedness of the skies; and it was comforting to the point of exhilaration that there was upon the sea a sailing warehouse filled with roof-trees. Men of skill and industry awaited the hour of landing, too, and their hearts bounded at the thought of building homes for their wives and children.

The cattle were uneasy in their stalls, the horses were restless, and the sheep bleated pitifully, disturbed by occasional violent motions in the ship's nose. A fine assortment of hogs grunted in satis-

faction, happy with the slops and waste, at which they munched as quietly as if rooting in Captain Swanson's land of sunshine.

For some days the face of nature was strange; but I proved a good sailor, carrying a sound appetite to every meal. Coming from the companion-hatch one glorious night of stars, the full joy of sailing burst upon me for the first time; the wind in the rigging, the creaking of the blocks, the wash of the water on the ship's sides, the rippling at her bow, and all the voices of the waves, struck responsive chords in my being. Off our port bow the sails of a passing ship glistened in the sheen of night, and the wide stretch of calm waters shone like a lake of silver, broken only by a long southwestern swell, fresh from the eternal wastes of the expansive sea. I glanced at the incommunicable stars, inhaled the invigorating breeze, and paced the deck, a creature of poetry and emotion. Once I passed the Captain, but he was so full of his own affairs that his influence was icy;

his hard, piercing eye was upon the business of the ship's course, — an infinitely more important affair than indulging in moonlight reveries. And this thought was impressed upon me a few minutes later, at sight of a floating wreck of spars. I shuddered when the perils of the sea were thus suggested; and from that bit of isolated flotage I built the story of a tragedy, of a tempest dashing some stanch ship to her doom. As I conjured up the scene, the picture became startlingly real. I could hear the thunder of mad billows upon a storm-swept coast; and in that fury I could see the mountainous waves plunging upon a barrier of rocky cliffs with a shock that vibrated and roared for miles. In the merciless impact of the surge I beheld the very ship of which that stray fragment had been a part; I followed her to her doom in the Niagara of foam and spray, where brave men died, — their lives gone like the snuffing out of the lamps that glimmered in her cabin when the final billow swallowed ship and men.

In spite of the many pleasures of the voyage, I was at times overcome with thoughts of so sad a temper that they differed but little from homesickness; and yet my San Francisco home had not been marked by those pleasant metes and bounds that go with a freeholder's title, making him swell with pride when he declares that his home is his castle. But the city and its hum sometimes arose in memory to haunt me, especially at such moments as those when I had the glimpse of floating spars; for I had lived in San Francisco so many years, that the very things I had hoped for and feared in its busy streets — even the accustomed daily sounds, and the spectacle of its affairs — had woven themselves into the texture of my life. At times I longed for vanished pleasures, — the quiet dinner and bottle of wine at some fellow-bachelor's table; the night at the theater, with the woman who, had my circumstances permitted, might have become my wife. But these things were now but monuments of the past, marking the

resting-place of many a pleasant "might have been," though quite useless at sea, or anywhere along the path of duty. So it chanced that, in my darker moods, or when I looked in upon myself closely, I often paced the deck alone; and I sometimes had misgivings as to the outcome of the voyage. Whatever it might prove for some of the passengers (who had probably lived less than a cab-horse existence), I wondered whether I should find a life, as the German agitators say, "befitting to a human being." There was one reflection, at least, that would save the trip from being denounced as a fool's errand,— I should have a glorious outing; and I took courage as I looked into the billows and heard the stiff breeze soughing through the rigging; for even if the Captain and his colonists should fail, Lawyer Hadley would charge a luxurious vacation to the profit side of life's ledger.

By the end of the sixth day, Doctor Saville was so far relieved from attending seasick people, that I was favored with his

companionship,—ever a sunny and stimulating influence. Slowly, too, Judge Davis began to rejoice in the delights of a sound stomach; and when his sea-legs were able to carry his frail body safely, he shambled to the lee side of the deck and became a welcome factor in conversation. To this trio a fourth and sturdy influence was often added,—Tom O'Fallon, first mate. He was a quick-witted Irishman of wide sea experience, and a thorough navigator. Full of lively stories, a keen observer, and a good judge of human nature, he was the life of many a company on board.

One evening we had been talking about the prospects of our colony. I was skeptical regarding Captain Swanson's plans, and I said so frankly. "I believe a good deal in the survival of the fittest," I said; "and as most of us have failed in business, I can't see by what magic we 're to succeed where we 're going."

"You 'd help up a fallen horse in the street, would n't you?" asked O'Fallon; "or

would you let it lie, and watch the other horses trample it to death?"

"Of course I'd help it up," I naturally replied.

"Well," returned Tommy, "the horses you'd help up might be of good service afterwards,—and it's the same way with this shipload of men. They've been down, but this ship's picked them up. Some of them have never been well fed or well housed, or hitched to a load on a decent road; haven't had a fair chance to get on their feet,—but they'll get it now."

Then Judge Davis contributed an illustration that has always lingered on my ear like a truth. "I used to go through the Capitol Park at Sacramento every morning, when I was a boy," he said, "and it was alive with song-birds of rare plumage; their throats were full of sweet music; they added a joy to the morning, and they destroyed insect pests. I lately went through the same park. There was not a note that anybody would care to hear;

dirty brown sparrows with screechy chirps swarmed everywhere, sole survivors of the wood. They had murdered every other bird,—I suppose they were the fittest to survive." The Judge looked at me as if to say he had shattered my idol. "Fittest for what?" he asked. "God only knows," he answered, thoughtfully. "And in Chicago, where I once lived, a few low-browed Irishmen and uncouth Dutchmen have cornered nearly all the industries worth owning, driving out men of culture. A few cunning Jews and politicians hover with beak and claw upon the city's commerce. They are the dirty birds of humanity,—brown, screeching sparrows and carrion crows. Are they the fittest? Fittest for what? I call them the cannibals and vultures of society, and the time is ripe for a people with higher ideals than pork and cotton. By the gods, let us plant a nation of high ideals in the South Seas!"

"And let it be a country where selfish men will not clutch their neighbors by

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the throats," added Doctor Saville, with great earnestness.

It was a moment of fine dreaming among the colonists. The admiral of the seas who gazed from the *Santa Maria* into the gleaming glories of the New World could not have felt happier than did the Doctor at the moment of his speech. He was the picture of hopeful enthusiasm as he stood looking toward the rim of the horizon, as if the solution of every social problem lay just beyond the purple gates of sunset into which he gazed. To him the Captain's island was a world templed with castles of gold,—a place fit for the gods.

Our conversations during many luxuriant days of sun and trades that followed often turned on questions that would interest students of social problems, rather than those who expect a history of our adventures.

There was an unfortunate fellow aboard, however, whose views were so odd as to attract particular attention; his eccentricities bordered on insanity, into which

they finally developed, with an ending that lingers like a nightmare in memory. He called himself Professor Bob Davison, though he was generally dubbed "Professor Bob," for brevity. He was too eccentric to carry a sustained part in a discussion, but he expounded his doctrines, from time to time, with marked vehemence; spoke of himself quite often in the third person, and frequently as the "celluloid cuff professor," —a name once applied to him by a newspaper, for reasons that suggest themselves. He was a man of striking appearance and good education; tall, bony, and marked by a nervous, shambling gait. It was evident that he had met with some great disappointment in life, and that trouble had turned his head.

Shortly after Judge Davis had given us his comparison of the sparrows, Professor Bob arose with a sudden gesture and repeated a strange sentence, which I had often heard him utter; but now he muttered it in a dazed way, saying, "The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests,

but the working-man hath not where to lay his head."

"That 's all right, Professor," returned Doctor Saville; "but now we 're going where everybody will have a place to lay his head."

The Professor did not heed the Doctor, but rambled on in his talk, like one in a dream. "If ever the 'have-nots' should unite to get justice," he declared with some violence, "God pity the 'haves'!"

After uttering that strange sentiment of anarchy he grew calmer for a moment, adding, "Gentlemen, whistles and bells have ruined our homes by calling the women from their beds to work, which is the cause of human misery. They are working the poor women to death, sirs, and making them slaves of red-headed time-keepers, who give them hell if they 're five minutes late. What 's the result? A diminished birth-rate, sirs, and artificial food for the poor little babies."

I cannot describe the strange look of bewilderment and despair that crossed the

unfortunate man's face at the end of his wild utterances; but it changed every feature and withered every semblance of intelligence, as much as if he had been stricken by the hand of death. Everybody saw the transformation with a shudder that chilled the blood, and all realized that the Professor had gone stark mad. Of a sudden he uttered a wail of despair that sent a chill shivering down my spine, as if the uncanny forces of insanity had penetrated the fortress of being; he gesticulated like one in torment, all the while crying in a maniacal way, — and before any of us realized the danger, or had recovered the tact and presence of mind to restrain him, Professor Bob, leaping like a deer, bounded from the deck into the sea. Several rushed to the railing and cried out, "Man overboard!" meanwhile watching the maniac's desperate struggling in the waves. Hoarse orders, a pulling of ropes, and the main-yards were braced back to check the ship in her course. Quickly a boat was lowered from the davits, but the drowning man's

strength was failing fast. Suddenly he was surrounded by half a dozen monstrous sharks, which had hovered timidly during the violent struggling. Now that the limp body began to sink quietly, one of the sharks approached boldly; suddenly it turned on its back to the biting position, and its great jaws, like saw-bladed shears, completed that dark tragedy of the sea. Other sharks fought for the flesh of our comrade, and before the ship had drifted a hundred feet, all that marked the grave of Professor Bob was a crimson streak in a shark-infested sea of deepest blue. With a sickness of heart that was weakening I turned from the scene, and that evening those who had known the dead man best recounted his many good deeds and told how his malady had been caused by an injury to the brain, received at an explosion in a machine-shop where he had worked. Frightful as his death seemed, it was, doubtless, without pain,—and more merciful, after all, than a life of horrible nightmares in a madhouse.

For a few days the terrible circumstances of our comrade's death made a topic of much talk, but the subject was soon dismissed. Had you heard the sailor part of the ship's company singing sea-songs (as I heard them singing, within a week of the Professor's death), you might have shared my reflection, that time, like the wave into which poor Bob plunged, soon engulfs the experiences of the passing hour.

For several weeks our skipper was so full of the business of sailing that he was seldom absent from the deck; so it was not until we had sailed for several days beyond Honolulu that I had an opportunity to see much of him, for he was a busy, order-giving man. But in the long, halcyon afternoons that followed, sitting on the shady side of the deck, his rotund figure emphasized by a suit of white ducking, he was the picture of a courageous pilot at ease. With First Officer O'Fallon in charge of the watch, Captain Swanson forgot his cares and became a genteel dreamer. It was then that his character

could be studied, for the part he took in conversation shed a light upon his rugged nature. Many a time I have seen him scanning the waters for every flying-fish and tumbling porpoise within eye-range, as little self-conscious as a child. Once his eye kindled, and he broke short his speech, when a sperm-whale spouted its bushy spray across the shining sea, a few miles off the starboard bow.

To relieve the hours of their dullness, he had many moving yarns of the sea, that bore the impress of verity, and carried a chill to one's marrow. He had seen whales battling with orca gladiators, those cannibals of the deep, whose most delicate morsel is the tongue of a whale, which they ravenously tear from that monster's capacious mouth. Once, in the moonlight of a perfect summer evening, when all hands were in a tranquil spirit, sailing in the tropics, the ocean had lifted as if by Titanic forces; then a mountain of flesh arose from the sea and churned the ocean into foam;—it was a monster whale in combat with a devil-

fish, whose writhing tentacles were like a bunch of sea-serpents, its black eyes as terrifying as the distortions of a fevered brain. Again, one wild night of booming surf, he had been driven near to his death by an error in a chart of the North Pacific; and before he realized his danger, the roar of breakers thundered so close as to drive the fear of death to every soul aboard. Close upon them, mountains of water tumbled upon a jagged patch of sunken reef, which loomed black and ragged in the lightning's vivid flash, — the next moment white, with thousands of tons of wild waves bursting into spray upon its coral teeth.

"We escaped by a miracle," he concluded, "as we swept through a narrow channel that marked the one safe course through a regular network of Hell Gates. And, say, men, I 've always thought fate preserved me for this voyage, — to do good before I die, and to fear God while I live."

That little speech was a chink in the old fellow's character, through which a softer light than common shed its rays; and I saw

that there was a mellow background in the rough seafarer's life. He was never a soft man for meekness and creeds, but a man to be trusted in the dark.

One day, while the trades were softly blowing, piling continents of clouds against the afternoon sky, I set to the task of leading him into a more detailed outline of his plans than I yet had heard. It was not difficult to draw him into conversation, especially when the theme was his dream of empire in the South Seas. The ambition to found an ideal home for worthy people lay as close to his heart as if it were a matter of the gallows to fail. With all his talking, however, he was more cautious and grave than Dr. Saville; for he realized the danger of bickerings among the men,—jealousies, quarrels, and final failure.

"As soon as we get our tents fairly pitched," he said, "I'm determined to have the women folks here; for it has been my observation that men cast off on an island get peevish and soon come to blows, whereas the women are like oil on the

troubled waters. Yes, sir; it won't be policy to separate the men for long from their wives and children."

The Captain realized the overpowering sway of his ambition,—a passionate eagerness to succeed with his colony; it flamed as high as the desires of youth,—and I saw the outlines of a Napoleonic purpose in his heart. "Let what comes in my way beware!" was written in every feature of the grave face of Swanson.

"I 'd rather drown in these waters, and be unmarked and forgotten," he said, "than lead these honest men to a forlorn hope, or to anything to cheat 'em out of the happiness I 've planned to give 'em."

"Yes," I returned; "I suppose you feel the responsibilities deeply."

"Do you suppose I ever go to my pillow without thinkin' of the wives and children we saw wavin' their good-byes?" he asked; "and do you think I can forget those faces, or get any rest until we 're landed high and dry? Of course the *Rosalie* 's as steady as a church; but there 's danger in every

sea, — pinnacles of rock, typhoons, unmarked reefs, earthquakes, and sometimes death hovering close, even when she looks as safe as a mill-pond. And I 'll tell you another thing," he continued with earnestness; "I never expect to see a happier day than when every man 's got his wife and dear ones safe ashore with him: so you see I 've got my work to do and my worries to nurse, while the rest of you are having your larks on deck."

The time was now ripe for sounding him about our destination, but I was wary of abrupt questioning, which I had known to nettle the old man to a fine temper. As if in anticipation of my thoughts, the Captain led me to his cabin; and there, by many maps and compasses, surrounded by charts and reckonings, my courage rose to the point of asking what I so much desired to know.

"How long do you expect to be on the voyage?" I cautiously asked.

"Well," he began, "you see, we 've passed the Hawaiian group, which 's back yonder

some six or seven sunsets; and I think three weeks more of fair winds, barrin' accidents or trouble in the hurricane belt, or gettin' stuck fast in the doldrums, ought to put us in the heart of the long-pig country."

"I don't understand two of your expressions,—'doldrums,' and 'long-pig,'" I said.

"They 're easy enough," he answered; "doldrums are the dead calms that make sailors curse about the equator,—and long-pig is what the people where we 're going love to feast on, which is human beings, especially the stuffed chiefs of rival tribes,—all roasted in fine cannibal style."

"And it 's into such a country that you expect white men to bring their wives and children? God forbid that men's families should have to face such dangers," I said, with a show of disgust.

"Don't get a false notion of all this," he replied; "for cannibalism 's caused by famine more than half the time, and the rest is caused by wars with rival tribes: so you see we 'll prevent famine, stop the

warring, and tame the heathens with our food and guns."

We sailed without special incident for many days of pleasant weather and fair winds: and at last, one morning, the Captain showed me an entry in his log, saying, with a meaning wink, "We shall be nearing land in a day or two, if fair winds continue."

"Our destination?" I asked.

"The very same," he replied.

"And then your secret of the dreamy isles will be an open book that all of us can read," I returned; and he said he should be happy when all could see that he had not exaggerated the beauties of the island.

I glanced at the log, as he invited me to do. The only entry I now recall ran something like this:—

"Lat. 22° S., Long. 176° W.—Fair weather; all well, and within 200 miles of our destination."

It is a joy to live over again the glories of that voyage, when, with steady trades, the ship went with a free dash for many

sunny days, gliding like a phantom through a quiet belt of starry nights. From many a dawn to many a dusk we watched the panoramic sky as it changed from tints of silver at peep of day to a rose-colored world that beckoned us toward the scarlets of sinking suns at the horizon. The dawns and twilights of those days linger yet, tranquil as the light and stillness of woods at early morn.

There were often billows of pearl athwart the blue sky, and across the horizon mountainous clouds raised their snowy crests above the distant shine of the sea,—Alpine peaks in mid-ocean. I can see again those pictures in the air, lying like visions of yesterday in the graceful distance of the leeward sea; again I am amid the restful surroundings of those sea-girt hours, with exclamations of growing wonder on my lips,—for the scenes were graven deep on the tablets of memory.

Day after day the thermometer registered 85° (Fahrenheit); but it was the sweetest, driest, coolest air I've ever felt at that

mark;—and as for the ship, "the gales of fortune breathed in her favor," as the reading of the log showed for uninterrupted weeks. At times she beat off the knots at surprising speed, in spite of the sedateness of her motion; and day after day the sun mounted into a peaceful sky, and the breezes were as rejuvenating as the breath of morning. In the flaming sun there was ever the tempered edge of salt air; not a suggestion of the parching heat of Arizona, nor of the clammy air of the jungles,—but all was sweetened by the pervading freshness of the ocean.

And often I felt, with Emerson, that the day was longevity enough, its balms never to be forgotten,—never to be remembered without a fresh bound of the heart. Amid such pictures night often gave a new note to the enchantment; for the ripening moon beamed upon a dreamy waste of waters, and the stars, "like cities of God," shone lustrous from the skyey vault.

"A lifetime of this, and good houses to live in, will make a man happy," the

Captain remarked; "and if you 'll make the land just about what it ought to be, you 'll understand why the old beachcombers love the low islands, with bills of fare fresh from the trees every day, instead of grubbin' like niggers for crumbs, or fightin' beastly weather in the States."

CHAPTER V.

A NIGHT OF HORRORS.

THE next day dawned bright and glorious, and the forenoon found a dozen or more of us seated around the Captain, before the sun had mounted high enough to destroy the shade of the pleasant quarter-deck. Doctor Saville, Randolph, Judge Davis, a few mechanics, and a quiet clergyman were of the party.

"It strikes me that the men aboard are all too enthusiastic over getting rich," ventured the Reverend Charles Lovejoy, after there had been some talk about the prospects of the colony; "and I trust," he continued, "that there will be no serious disappointments."

"Well, I've never promised anybody that he 'd ever make a dollar where I 'm takin'

the company," returned Captain Swanson; "and if there 's a fellow aboard who thinks it 's a land of gold nuggets or greenbacks, he 's been dreaming,—that 's all there is to it. And do you know what we 'll have to do with that sort of people? Take 'em back and get 'em a new set of brains, or set 'em down to the same old treadmills again."

"May I ask," timidly returned the clergyman, "what is the highest reward the average man may expect, if your fondest hopes should come true?"

"Just what I 've promised," answered Swanson; "which is a sweet pump and a warm bed,—two of the things money buys, eh? Then they 'll get food and clothing—which they 'll need very little of—cheaper than they ever got 'em, 'and without doubt, defalcation, or discount,' as the old notes of hand used to run. Now, parson, do you think any of us 'll worry much about winter fuel, or that there 'll be much of a struggle for bread in the land of bread-fruit, where times loosen up if a fellow gives any stray tree a good shaking?"

"Really, I had n't thought of it in just that light," murmured the clergyman; "and I'm beginning to see that you are quite a political economist, after all."

"A what!" exclaimed the Captain;—"I 'm nothin' of the sort; I 'm only an old sea captain who 's kept up a thinkin' betimes. Look here! If an old beach-comber never goes to bed hungry,—unless he 's too drunk to eat,—and if every old Kanaka can set on his naked haunches with his belly full, why can't we all have plenty, especially with good farmers among us, with tons of seeds, with the latest and best agricultural implements, and all sorts of Yankee inventions? Can you tell me?"

The minister made no reply, except to throw up his hands, as if to say he was satisfied. But Swanson was full of talk; so he continued, "I 'm wound up now, and I might as well rattle out some more of my ideas,—but I 'd like to ask the Judge, here, what he calls wealth, anyhow."

Judge Davis filled his brow with judicial wrinkles before venturing upon an answer;

then he said: "Well, that 's a sort of puzzler; but I guess you 'd call it an abundance of useful things. A man with plenty of needful goods would certainly be pretty prosperous, or at least a long way from pauperism, even if he had no gold."

The Captain was pleased with the definition, so he appropriated it, and wove it around his island with considerable ingenuity, until it seemed to fit the conditions the colonists were to meet.

"Wealth 's what 's good and useful," said he; "a good climate, good roads, seas full of fish, rich soil, timber-lands. How 's that for an offhand list? Well, just wait till you get to my island, which the chart shows is not far away! Why, bless you, men are suckled by nature in these South Seas, just like a babe at its mother's breast; so it 's no wonder that a lot of people stick to the beach like sand-crabs."

"In such a country there must be plenty of leisure for fine dreaming," I suggested.

"Yes, if you 've got nothing better to do," replied the Captain.

"I guess the people get pretty lazy," added Judge Davis.

"Not if they've got brains in their skulls, and don't lay drunk," added the Captain; "for the natives are spry enough to run one another's chiefs down and get them into the boiling-pots; and a white 's all right, if he'll stay sober, and keep quiet till he gets 'climated."

"Did you ever know any great activity among the whites down there?" I asked.

"Activity! You bet your last dollar," he answered; "and the island traders are regular Yankees, as pert as hawks; they get rich swindlin' the natives and doin' up tenderfeet. But there 's others that do a good deal of work. Why, I've seen fellows writin' story-books down there, in some of the islands, and professors gathering herbs, and once, some artists sweatin' like niggers, in spite of the palm trees."

"Well," chimed in the minister, "I suppose we shall all have a chance for meditation, and I'm rejoicing over the prospect of seeing men look up from their treadmill

tasks, and I hope to see them turning their thoughts to the Creator of all the gifts that the new life brings them."

I thought it was now time to expound, so I turned to the company and said, "I have often wondered why wealthy men become slaves to their callings. You may see them toiling away as if they expected to live a thousand years, piling up more and more,— and I don't envy them at all."

"But you 'd like to have their millions, just the same," returned Judge Davis.

"Only that I might the better carry out my ideas of justice and duty to my fellow-men, and develop my own character along rational lines," I replied; "for a man hitched to his fortune, just for the sake of the miserly worship of money, is but another variety of slave, and just as abnormal as the one narrowed by poverty. It is a misfortune to regard wealth as a goal to be fought for, as if it were a ticket to immortality. But you have set me adrift from my purpose! What I wanted to say is this: the very best things in life do

not require money,—at least, not much; for example, the wonders of sleep, the joys of health, the glory of creation,—these lie at the very feet of the humblest."

"That 's the way to put it," said the Captain, "and we want more of that sort of talk."

"Well, I get wound up sometimes myself," I returned; "and it 's a comforting thought that the stars shed their splendid beauties upon the average man's path as freely as upon the highway of princes. A modest income will supply all that is good and great, for the chief blessing is poured upon us at birth,—I mean the great gift of life itself."

Doctor Saville carried the thought into more poetic realms. "Into each life may fall the glories of love," he said, "the pleasures of sweet air, the splendors of sunset and dawn. It requires no millions to unlock the heart or thrill the soul. Don't the actor and orator move rich and poor alike? and don't books open their secret chests and pour their treasures into the lap

of the poorest mechanic as freely as into that of the bank president?"

"Yes; and the gods of fable assumed a common form," said Judge Davis. "Odin lived in a hut. The simplicity of the great is an old story."

"Christ was born in a manger," added the Reverend Charles, "and the Son of man had not where to lay his head."

"Leaving the gods and demi-gods to themselves for a moment," said Randolph, "what's a fellow to do if he's busy ten to twelve hours a day trying to get food for his kids? Do you think he's got much of a chance with books and actors?"

Captain Swanson's reply ended the discussion, for the gong sounded for dinner, and our nipping appetites hurried us to the table. "We 'll have no long hours or slavish tasks," he said, as we started for the meal; "for it's to run away from toil and moil, and injustice, and throat-cutting that we're heading for my little Eden."

Though the day had broken clear and remained calm, there was a kind of trouble

upon the sea when we returned from dinner, and a note of warning rose in the soughing breeze and moaned in the rigging; so that in spite of the brightness there was a hint of wildness in the sky, through which flecks of high clouds darted with the swiftness of carrier-pigeons. The glass foretold a serious change in the weather. There was a trace of worry in the Captain's face, and the growing roughness of the sea threatened to render the decks too sloppy for further discussions of social problems.

With something akin to the instinct of fowl, the Captain divined trouble ahead, though he merely said, "The sea's kicking up a nasty mess," as he scanned the horizon with his binoculars, and took the deck from the second officer.

Within an hour we were spanking with a wild dash before a heavy sea. The Captain's face grew more and more anxious, and the men spun the wheel with increasing difficulty, glancing often into the rough seas behind us, which rose rapidly to the danger

line. To add to the alarm, the barometer now fell fast, and the wind mounted to such a pitch that the decks were soon awash. Kites and topsails were taken in, and other canvas was reduced by reefing; but the billows became so wild that many were seized with great terror, and we were battened in for the first time on the voyage,—the first experience of many at sea. Even the Captain and his sailors were nervous; for it was plain that if the wind should rise much higher, the straining canvas would carry away, and there would be danger of swamping. Fortunately, the gale grew no stronger, though it continued for some hours with considerable velocity and much booming of heavy seas; but the *Rosalie* held her own, darting through the tempest unharmed, and it was a great relief when we were allowed more freedom.

The night fell dark and wild, but the sea ran no higher. At dusk the sky was full of flying clouds, and by nine o'clock everything was as black as ebony; the men were up and stirring all over the ship,

colonists as well as sailors. Captain Swanson had been on deck ever since the storm struck us, his manner grave from the moment the binnacle-lamp was lighted before the wheel. He looked upon the compass-boxes often to see how the ship was headed, considered his chart, and said to me as I passed, "We 've only a few more nights before we 're at the end of our voyage."

Scarcely had he finished the sentence when there was a cry from aloft, "There 's a strange light ahead, sir!"

The Captain wiped his glasses, and searched the horizon in vain; there was not a beam visible, but a few minutes later there came a faint lightness out of the far-away sky, and it grew so fast that it soon lit the horizon, and when it was fuller grown, a kind of sheen fell over the sea.

"It 's bearing dead ahead, sir!" repeated the vigil, "and looks as if it might be a ship afire."

"Then she 's running dead before the wind," said the Captain.

"Aye, aye, sir," returned the watch.

The light increased gradually, like a rising moon; and it grew larger and more lurid as time wore on, until finally the entire sea was illumined by the strange spectacle of a burning ship in that wild waste of waters. A long path of light stretched between us and the floating furnace, which was now seen rising in lurid outline, and the next moment lost behind leaping seas that danced and roared ahead. With incredible swiftness that phantom of flame plowed through the wild, dark night, until finally our Captain began to alter his course, to make sure of dodging her at a safe distance. Not a detail of the scene escaped his watchful eye.

While the spectacle was a mystery, it was the last thought of anybody that a man or rat survived on that dreadful derelict, which it seemed must long before have become the charnel-house and crematory of every creature she had carried.

Imagine our bewilderment and the diabolical horror of the sight, when we beheld

figures moving upon the quarter-deck, by the time we had come within about a third of a mile of the burning ship. Some of the dark forms appeared to move suddenly toward the vessel's waist, as if to launch boats; but they wilted like leaves in a furnace, and their lives went out while we gazed with horror upon the scene. Six or eight men survived, however, and they were huddled upon the quarter-deck, which was evidently kept cool enough for human habitation by running dead before the wind; for, in spite of the great fire, which was probably a vast quantity of burning oil, the upper sails were whole and drawing.

On before the wind the condemned ship darted, her wings of flame leaping higher and higher into the blackness, until at last her topsails vanished like wisps of paper, leaving the poor wretches to the flames and stormy seas. But we were powerless to give aid; for no boat could have lived in such seas as then raged, even if the flying palace of fire could have been checked or overtaken in her desperate race before the gale.

Fortunately for our nerves, the storm somewhat abated, though both gale and waves remained high enough to give us a good taste of the rough side of sea-voyaging. Everywhere there were extra precautions for safety, and a double watch held vigil; many colonists were such thorough landsmen that they were overcome with fears of disaster, and so afraid of horrors of the sea that they could not sleep.

I soon accustomed myself to conditions; became as comfortable as possible, and gave little heed to the weather. In time, being wholly free from seasickness, I rather enjoyed the rhythmic booming and swashing of heavy seas against the iron sides of the ship, which now and then quivered under the blows, as I lay listening to the "chung-a-lung-a-boom-chung" refrain of the waves. I was lying thus about midnight, in a sort of light slumber, when I was awakened suddenly, as if some one had seized me with violence; the ship quivered, the lamps danced, and consternation reigned. My first thought was that we had either struck

a rock or a hidden reef, or had run upon another ship in the blackness of the noisy night. It was a moment of such wildness and fear that the memory of it is a disturbance of the nerves.

I hastened to the deck in my pajamas, followed by men in all sorts of undress and in all stages of fright; but their eager questions were lost in the sound of the sea and the roaring of the wind. The third officer saw us, and knew we were stirred by a panic of fear; so he bawled out in a firm, assuring tone, "There 's no danger, men! we 've only struck a dead whale."

But for the glancing blow, the softness of the obstacle, and the mercy of God, this jar would have cost us our masts.

The pungent odor of rank blubber and escaping gases from the mountain of carcass drove every man to his bunk. The spongy blubber, like a thousand-ton cushion of India-rubber, had saved us from damage; hundreds of barrels of oil escaping from the leviathan made the sea calmer; and the ship was soon free of that island

of decomposing flesh. Thus ended the second horror of the night, and the *Rosalie* was soon set in her course again.

It was far toward morning before the ship's company grew quiet; but, strange as it may appear, that serenity was to be disturbed by a yet more thrilling and mysterious occurrence than either of those that had broken our rest.

Most of us were asleep when the third event of the night occurred,—but enough were awake to give prompt aid to the crew. The previous awakenings had left men's nerves tuned to concert pitch, and they were ready for action the moment of alarm.

The wind was still quite boisterous, and the sea was raging, when I first heard a commotion on deck,—the shuffling of mariners' feet above me, the voices of men, and the cry of the lookout that a ship was bearing down upon us. I hastened to the deck, where my eye at once caught sight of a ship's port light. The tempest had abated somewhat, but a great sea was still running.

"I don't like the way she acts," said Officer O'Fallon to the second mate, "and you 'd better wake the Captain and order up a few men with Springfields."

The order was given quickly, and six men appeared, equipped for battle.

"What 's up?" I asked, as soon as I could quietly drop a question to O'Fallon.

"It may be nothing," he said; then softer, "and it may be pirates. Anyhow, I don't like the way she 's gone about and headed for us."

In a few minutes, while O'Fallon stood watching, the pirate's headway was checked, and a sound of cursing broke upon us. It issued from a boat that had been lowered from the approaching ship, which had made no signals, either of friendly office or of distress. The boat was evidently manned by desperadoes; and, by their curses, they feared neither God nor foul weather,—much less anybody aboard a ship which they mistook, doubtless, for a little island trader. Their shouts and curses rose higher as they pulled nearer to us, and this

led to the thought that they were surely both drunk and bent on mischief.

"Boat ahoy! What boat is that?" thundered the second officer, through the ship's largest megaphone, his magnified voice carrying above the noises of the sea.

By this time the approaching boat was near enough for us to descry the rogues plainly, for the moon now and then broke through rifts in a wild sky. There were eight disorderly rowers in the boat, all carrying belts with weapons; by them sat others, with cutlasses and rifles. They made no answer, but rowed sturdily, as if to come alongside and board us by surprise.

"If you come closer, you do so at your peril!" roared the megaphone.

Their answer was a ringing shot that grazed the roundhouse; and another followed.

"Fire!" commanded Swanson, whereupon there was the sharp report of six Springfields.

Three of the eight wilted at their oars, one evidently dead, the others groaning in

great pain. Those who were able turned suddenly and made for their own vessel.

"If piracy 's her game, we 'll give her hell," he said; "but don't fire on the poor devils in the boat, unless they bother us again."

In less than five minutes one of the Maxims was trained on the lights of the pirate ship,—but there was no reply. If the captain of that outlaw of the sea did not think he had overhauled a man-of-war, it was only because our trim *Rosalie* lacked the bulk and shape of one of those great fighting-machines; and if he ever ran up the colors of the *Jolly Roger* again, it must have been after many holes were well calked, and at a moment when he felt sure of his quarry.

Whether the wretches in that tiny boat of prey, with their dead and dying, ever reached the mother-ship, or whether they were left by her to be swamped, with their black hearts in their wicked breasts, and their foul oaths upon them like a plague, we never knew; for we caught no further

glimpse of their pestiferous and venturesome cockle. But one vision rises plainly from that night of vivid pictures: it is that of a pirate ship scudding away from us in the broken moonlight,—with the sound of fifty or more ringing farewell shots from the Maxim ranging after her as she hurried on, her course marked a safe distance off our starboard bow.

CHAPTER VI.

WE REACH ATOLLIA.

MORNING dawned so clear, and with a sky so beautiful, that it was difficult to realize the wildness that had enveloped the night. But for the rhythmic southwestern swell, there remained not a trace of the storm, and the forenoon was a delight.

We knew from the Captain's noon observations, and by the spirit that kindled a new light in his eyes, that we were nearing the gateway to a world of wonders; and we were thrilled with the prospects of discovery as we drew close to the shores of our new world. Clouds to landward began to bank ahead of us, painted in various hues; and the charmed port that had cost a long and patient cruise now lay close at hand.

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I cannot find language to tell of the joy we felt at sight of the blessed land, after so many weeks of sunshine and storm upon a vacant sea; but the words of the ancient legend of India came into my mind, "that the first men ate of the earth, and found it deliciously sweet."

Our company yearned for the touch of the fragrant earth; and when the land breeze blew in our faces, resinous with the smell of wild growing things, I was eager to go ashore. Beyond the breach of the coral reef, just at the curve of the land, smoke curled skyward, as if a large part of the people had camp-fires near the shore. Here was an outlook that stimulated the fancy,—the prospect of dealings with queer, childlike races; the people would be strange, and their tongues would be as foreign as if they had got their language fresh from Mars.

It was still early afternoon when the coast of our island first loomed ahead, "heaving up in peaks and rising vales," like an evergreen platform in the distance, with peeps

of mountain and hints of tropical luxuriance, that sent the blood coursing with the vigor of youth.

"There!" said Captain Swanson, "there's Atollia, beyond the opening in the reef. We've been sighted, I guess. Try the glasses, and you'll see the bamboo houses."

I seized the binoculars, and the creation that had glimmered like a heap of blurred images in a haze loomed clear beyond the surf. The roofs of bamboo houses lifted above the crest of foam, and I caught a peep of human dwellings among straggling palms.

Joy filled every heart. It was seen in the relaxation of men's faces,—all smiling and at peace with the world; some pointing and explaining; others entranced over the prospect that had risen so suddenly, as if each were a Columbus on the brink of discovery. Doctor Saville and Judge Davis were as excited as children.

By the time we had reduced sail, the wind fell to a gentle land breeze. The hour was one of unmixed rejoicing and

curiosity. We had come to the one safe and inviting entrance to a calm, reef-locked lagoon; but on both sides of this quiet gateway the sea bellowed, throwing a mist that hung like a cloud of steam far above the cannonading of the surf.

Soon after the first peep of the land that was to play so important a part in our affairs, we gained the entrance that led to the shores of Atollia; it was a haven as quiet as the lee of most islands, and the calm fell upon us with great suddenness. By heading through a blue streak of peaceful sea and taking in sail we were quickly at anchor in six fathoms of water. The sails were closely bound to the yards, the boats were overhauled, and there was a busy stir among the crew, who put things in shape for a long stay.

"The *Rosalie*'s as safe in this landlocked harbor as a child in its mother's arms," said Swanson; "and the Kanakas used to tell me that their grandfathers could not remember when there was ever any trouble in these waters."

"And I hope we'll be as safe ashore as the ship is here," I returned, sounding our leader.

"No danger whatever, if you'll do as I do," he replied; "for I understand the people and their customs."

"Here comes a boat," said O'Fallon; "and she's heading for us."

Sure enough, right from the direction of that breeze, that smelt of wildwoods, a trim boat was darting toward us; it was manned by active oarsmen, whose brown skins glistened like statues of polished lava. Island-like, they were naked, but for loin-cloths of tapa and the cloak-like illusion of tattooed designs.

It was fully a mile to shore, but there was an audible hubbub among the natives; it came to us on the breeze, and sounds of the tumult fell upon our ears.

"There's no danger in their cackling," said the Captain, "for they're as curious as monkeys, and there'll be as many here as can get boats."

I clapped a spy-glass to my eye and

saw many of the brown-skins embarking. It was plain we were in for a pile of visitors.

"Is it a good sign?" I asked.

"Yes," returned Swanson; "for if we were tapu, not a devil of them would draw near; and if they only signal for friendship, all's as right as right can be."

It was not long before the rhythmic stroking of many paddles brought the first boat within a couple of hundred yards of us.

"She's a bird of a thirty-footer," said O'Fallon; and the men clustered forward to see the natives in their large canoe.

Presently up shot a bamboo pole from the approaching boat, and the wind whipped a streak of white cloth at the top of it,—a milky streamer.

"That's their tapa sign of welcome," said Swanson, "and I'll answer them in the same language."

So, right before our eyes, the old man pulled at a telescopic, cane-looking affair, until its joints had lengthened like a long

bamboo fishing-rod. From his pocket he whipped out a folded tapa sheet as thin as paper and as tough as silk,—something he must have carried for years. With a sudden twirl it was unfurled; in another twinkling it was waving aloft like a banner.

Leaning over the rail, the old man swung it three times. His signaling was answered by a similar wave, and in a moment the visitors were fairly upon us,—as brown and muscular fellows as ever grew.

"Alofa!" cried Swanson, with many like soft words of friendly island welcoming,—and they were answered with much spirit.

Like a flash, every fellow (except one to attend the boat) sprang into the sea and began to swim for us like fish. There was no distrust, but the greatest confidence. The swimmers threw their arms in the freest manner imaginable, and were soon piling over one another upon the deck. They surrounded the Captain, delighted and amazed that he knew their tongue. He motioned them to be seated; and they

fell upon their naked haunches in the shade. Unaccustomed as they were to our manners, they were surprised at those of us who sat on stools.

"I am going to talk to our visitors and explain what this expedition 's drivin' at," said the Captain, clipping his final "g's," as he did often under excitement; "and I want every man to treat them first-class, — that is, with the greatest courtesy. Some of 'em are the same as kings."

"How are we to show our feelings?" I asked.

"By keeping still until my speech is over," he said, "and then by showing them the ship, and treatin' them as kindly as if they were your best friends. If they offer a gift, take it, or they 'll be mad; but don't try to pay anything, or you 'll insult them terribly."

The Captain then explained, in a fluent ten minutes' talk in Atollian, that we were not traders nor missionaries, such as had harassed the people and devastated the other islands; that we had left our homes

because he had told us of the pleasant life and interesting people of Atollia; that we had brought many good things for planting and breeding, and for pleasures like fishing and hunting, as they should see; and finally, that we hoped to settle in the island and become their allies and brothers, joint tenants of the land.

There was some further talk, and at its close a shaven-headed old fellow, who proved to be Taipu, the principal chief and ruler of the island, arose and replied that he thought well of our mission. He also said that our coming was not unexpected, for one of his wives had seen a shark of strange color in her dreams; it spoke an unknown tongue; its tail was of the color of bleached tapa-cloth, — and the omen was good.

"Few men of your race have ever come to our islands," was Swanson's translation of the chief's words; "but some of us remember your chief, though we were little boys in that day. As a rule, those who have touched here have never gone away;

the palm groves have shaded them until their hair became of the color of foam, and they have died among their children, with the south wind in their faces, by the music of the waves. The coral waxes, the palm grows, but man departs by the gates of death."

There was more of such talk, after which there was a lively bobbing of shaven heads in consultation. The chiefs had our case (and the old wife's dream, no doubt) under advisement. Returning to our part of the deck at the end of some ten minutes' talk, the elder chief spoke briefly again, extending his arms as if to embrace us within their clasp,—a rare gesture of hospitality.

Though none of the colonists ever had set foot on South Sea soil, and though none ever had held dealings with native races, all felt the sincerity of the welcome.

"You may share our cocoa-palms and bread-fruit," he said; "and all the colors of the rainbows are yours. When the sea makes its music on the reef, and when

the wild bird sings, it will be an ode of welcome to our land."

The old fellow then uttered a grunt, which was responded to by the entire company of large-eyed Polynesians as if it were an amen. Their luminous glances fell upon us with the sincerity of a benediction.

"Show 'em the ship, and give 'em a hearty welcome!" said Swanson; and we fell to the pleasant task of hospitality with unlimited good will. We had not gone far in our demonstrations when the chief signaled that other boats were coming. Then he nudged one of his men, who produced a young cocoanut as mysteriously as if he had been a juggler. With a long knife the nut was severed, and the juice was divided equally in the halves, which served as cups.

Taipu then handed one cup to Captain Swanson, and, lifting the other to his lips, made a soft speech. Its substance was explained to be a sacred pledge of friendship.

By this time four other boats had arrived,

and their men vied with one another to swim to the ship and climb aboard. They were as eager as children, and when their predecessors explained the situation, the heartiness of our native friends' welcome was signified by the sound of many voices.

Down we went into the hold, the islanders following. They kept close to Swanson and plied him with questions. Our stores of good things impressed them as a floating harvest, and their queries as to the origin of this and that were boundless. Coming to the deck again, the natives halted, and were charmed with the compartment in which our live-stock dwelt. The swine (favorite of all South Sea morsels) caught their eyes, and they lingered with joy upon the sight of such porkers as they never before had seen,—gigantic Berkshires, dignified and tame specimens of hog-culture, wandering fat and tempting in their pens. Chief Taipu sat admiring the hogs with as much fervor as a connoisseur brings to the sampling of a favorite vintage.

"Take your choice," said Swanson; "for

to each chief is due a large hog,—to bind the friendship."

The eyes of the chiefs beamed, and again the shaven heads fell to consulting. Finally old Taipu modestly chose a small pig.

The choice was overruled by Swanson, however, who pointed to one of the noblest of the swill-eaters, saying it was Taipu's property. The native aristocrat gave way to the Captain's choice with becoming dignity.

Five or six of our handiest men helped the chief's servitors to throw a stiff line around Taipu's magnificent animal, after which two of the best sows remaining were chosen by the two lesser chiefs, rulers of small provinces. The Captain's first selection was conducive to breeding, as he explained to the Atollians.

To make the measure full, two goodly sized shoats were given to Taipu for a feast, —"to be eaten in memory of our love."

True to island etiquette, the gifts were not refused; and there was joy when the five presents were lowered into native boats.

The oarsmen were off at a dart, and we learned later that the swine were quartered in an unoccupied bamboo house, where the women and children of the village fed them bread-fruit and young cocoanuts, which were devoured with relish.

Chief Taipu and his servants remained for half an hour, smoking and chatting with Swanson. All were fine specimens of manhood, the thews and sinews of even the oldest bearing evidences of vigor and athletic training; and this was not singular, when it is considered that sports are believed to be of the gods, for which reason games of strength and feats of skill form part of the religious ceremonials of Polynesian tribes.

The natives' bodies were tattooed in strange characters, most of them hideous in our sight, though greatly admired by the Atollians. Among the figures, those of sharks abounded; but this was not to be wondered at, when it is remembered that sharks always had been regarded as gods by the strange men who stood before us.

During Swanson's talk with Taipu, the gentle savage remarked that his people had been sorely pressed by their enemies, and that cannibal invaders had within a month feasted on one or two of Atollia's favorite sons and two women, the captives being led to the sea and drowned by those in charge of the feast. Though the victims knew what was to be done, they had not resisted, but had allowed themselves to be held under the water. Such is the contempt in which death is held by the islanders, that they become stoics the moment they hear the rustling wings of the dark angel.

The Atollians had been routed frequently by superior forces, and the invaders had carried the advantage of deadly steel-pointed arrows. Many of the chief's people had been killed, many badly wounded; some had been driven far back into the bush, among the spirits of the wood. Considering the native fear of ghosts, and the many traditions of malign spirits roaming in the forests, the enemy must have made itself felt with great force.

"We have weapons that will kill all mortal enemies," explained Swanson, "and when our man-killers send forth deadly volleys, they roar like the voices of devils."

The chief shuddered at this description of Maxims and six-pounders, and the Captain promised to explain the mysteries of his great machines of war as soon as there was an opportunity ashore.

"You may tell your warriors," said the subtle Captain, "that the men in the great ship have weapons big enough to kill all your enemies, and that no mortals can approach to do us harm during battle; for these guns search out the enemy at long distances, killing bunches of men as if they were flies. Our guns will also tear up trees and frighten the evil spirits away."

We gave the chiefs a rousing farewell, a loving and heart-felt cry of "Alofa!" just as they sprang into the sea to swim to their boat. Half a dozen fine chickens, their legs tied with twine, were handed to the visitors as they departed. Care had been taken to select good specimens of the

whitest birds, white being the native omen of good luck. To have given a thing of bad import—improper in color or form—would have been an unfortunate spoiling of a day well begun.

CHAPTER VII.

WELCOMED BY CHIEFS.

BEFORE the pink of dawn had grown golden with the shafts of a tropical sun the next morning, we were astir, eager for debarkation. The ship had been our continent for so long, carrying us to varying climates over the heaving main, that all were anxious to lose our sea-legs and accustom our eyes to the firm-set earth once more; and when we gazed landward, there was enchantment in the prospect. Of course our imaginations painted a halo there; but there also existed the background of reality, — a substantial land, fit for any white man's home, and the handsomest scenery in the world to frame it in.

Soon there was a splendid sun, which bathed the coast in the soft lights of early

morning; and a refreshing trade fell upon us as we looked longingly toward Atollia, preparing to leave the *Rosalie* for the land where we were to find life marvelous and the habits of men interesting. With the aid of the Captain's binoculars I could see that giant cocoa-palms fringed the shore to the left of the landing; and at my first peep I beheld many islanders plunging into the surf for their morning bath.

The Captain gave orders for two boats to be made ready for landing; soon after, a cabin-boy brought word that Swanson wanted to see me.

"Sit down, Hadley," he said; "for there's planning to be done."

"I 'm at your service," I returned, and sat down.

"Well," he resumed, "there's ticklish business ahead, and I want you to go ashore with Saville and me. We've got to call and pay our respects to Taipu and his chiefs; for if we'd land and browse around without that, hell 'd be poppin'

very soon. It would n't be proper,—and it 'd be damned dangerous."

"They 've got etiquette, then?" I asked.

"Etiquette? Well, I reckon! Why, their manners are something complicated, and it 's easy to insult them bad,—but you need n't be scared, for I know them and their manners."

"Then what disturbs you, Captain?" I asked; "for you call it ticklish; how ticklish?"

"It 's this way," he answered; "they 're easy turned by superstition at the start. Why, once I knew an infernal old beachcomber to turn loose and convince a whole tribe that a rival trader was full of devils. He did it by puttin' luminous paint and wind-harps in his enemy's warehouse. And what do you think was the result? Why, I 'll be eternally lost if those natives did n't dance around the suspected man like devils, and they tied stones to him, offered up witch-prayers, and cast him into the sea. But unless we make a bad break at the start, or unless some stray trader crops

up to put a hoodoo on us, there 'll be no trouble."

"And we are to land now?" I asked.

"That 's it. I 'll take O'Fallon, Randolph, Judge Davis, Parson Lovejoy, and you in my boat. She 's a twenty-footer, and we 'd better take a well-armed crew along. We must have our final powwow with the chiefs; we 've got to make our terms about settlin' here, and stick to what we agree. They 've got some queer laws, — but it would make a monkey laugh if white men had to be too strict about obeyin' them. Then, you know, Americans are all kings, anyhow; and we can soon become a South Sea parliament, and make all the laws that are needed."

"What kind of a treaty do you expect to get out of them?" I asked.

"Pretty near anything I want," he said; "but principally the right to a large part of the lands, — exclusive rights, mind you! — and when we 've agreed to treat 'em right, it must be understood that no damned Kanaka is to step in our way. We

must be for peace, but they 've got to see that we 'll have no tomfoolery. The cannibal business must stop, and things must go Christian from the start, even if we have to turn on the machine-guns and fill the sea with 'em. That 's the only way to deal with man-eaters."

For the first time, I now saw the harsh side of our eccentric skipper's character; and as we walked along the snowy decks of the *Rosalie*, I thought how solemnly grizzled and gloomily determined that knotty piece of humanity looked,—with the soft colors of the ship for a contrasting background. Surely, he was bringing the rigid and warlike spirit of the Cæsars among men whose fathers had never known Homer or felt the influence of the Sermon on the Mount.

"While I expect no sort of trouble," he said, "and while I even look for the rulers to welcome us as friends and brothers, I think it wise to go ashore well armed; so here 's a loaded revolver for you, and a dozen extra cartridges,—

and here 's a dagger! The others have theirs."

And I was at once made into a sort of walking arsenal. In a few minutes we were running down the ladder and stepping into the Captain's boat; some of us, who were not accustomed to the water, left the ship timidly. We had scarce got a spinning start when another boat, bearing a dozen seamen and venturesome colonists, followed in our wake. Our boats headed for the only visible landing,—a beautiful opening in the tropical forest; and as we drew near the shore, where the water was as clear as if it had been distilled for a druggist, the coral and rocks—covered with sea-moss—quivered at the bottom like trembling foliage. There must have been four or five fathoms of crystal sea of even depth right up to the white sands of the beach, where the surf broke into singing foam. The background of waving green was as pretty as any picture,—but there were many odors of blooming things, with a peep of deep forests beyond.

The signal of our coming was made by the first natives who saw us; but they soon stalked away beyond a cape of woods, and were lost in the shadow of some noble cliffs. It was not long, however, until the green was covered with natives, all early-risen and still wrapped in their night-garments of many-colored tapa. It was an odd sight, to look upon so many brown skins in their clinging robes of sleep. Grown folks and children gathered in great numbers, and before our boats were ready for landing, many willing hands were at the proper spot to give help and welcome.

"The signs are in our favor," said the Captain; "for the chiefs have given news of our coming, and the people are evidently friendly."

A message-bearer approached from a steep hill, carrying a bamboo pole crowned with a flag of tapa; he ran fast, blowing a ram's horn; it was a noise and custom of friendly welcome, and we felt at ease. In the calm and all-pervading quiet of the scene, we feasted our eyes upon a place of

wonders, and I knew for the first time the full meaning of the old saying, that the first experience can never be repeated,— "The first love, the first sunrise, the first South Sea island, are memories apart, and touched a virginity of sense."

"Alofa! alofa!" cried the Captain (followed by many like greetings, that might have been the language of Saturn, for me), when the tapa-flag bearer had got within hearing distance.

"I've told the black racehorse to tell his ruler we're here," said Swanson, "and he bids us follow."

The messenger then accommodated his pace to that of white men, and led us toward a grove of cocoa-palms. It was plain that our coming was regarded as no common affair, for the people fell back as we advanced; it was not fear, but evidently a wholesome respect for the gravity of the conference.

A drumming soon fell upon our ears, as of some public music; and it grew louder as we approached, as if the woods held a

corps of musicians,—wild, odd music, but of welcome, not war.

In some ten minutes we had come to the meeting-place of old Taipu. He was there with many chiefs, and they greeted us with the friendly grunting common among Atollians, bidding us to be seated upon large mats that were spread on the ground. In the manner of trained men the chiefs fell upon their haunches, looking like a batch of tailors at their benches. Thus arranged under the trees, we were ready for the conference that was to decide our future. There was a scent of cooking bread-fruit in the air, and the smell of many delicate flowers.

A bunch of scarlet hibiscus made a fine background for Taipu, whose tattooed chest rose above it when he stood and waved to a servant. Quicker than the service at the finest hotels, two stalwart young men brought forth a large wooden bowl. It contained a white food, not unlike rice in appearance,—the staple diet of the islanders. In a moment more they came

with their arms full of young cocoanuts, and later, with an immense pipe.

"Do as I do, men," cried Swanson; and our eyes fell upon him as if we had been hypnotized.

In a moment the chiefs butted their heads on the matting, as if to appease their gods. Swanson's grizzled head bumped next, and all of us followed in the devotion.

Then Taipu dipped his forefinger into the food and ate some of it; the lesser chiefs followed, after which the bowl was placed in front of our Captain, and then passed to us.

"They eat first as a mark of great politeness," said Swanson; "for no Atollian ever offers a guest a dish that he has not first stirred and sampled, to show that it is free of poison."

We each ate a mouthful or two of the food, after which a young and luscious cocoanut was placed before each of us,—a sort of South Sea dessert. Bone knives were passed with which to punch holes in the tender eyes of the nuts,—and we were

soon drinking that which no man ever tasted far away from the trees; it was the natural milk of a wonderful fruit,—and it was as sweet as nectar.

A large pipe was lighted and smoked for a puff or two by each chief, and then passed to Swanson and the rest of us. When the last man had taken his puff, the ceremony of welcome was ended, and the assembly was declared ready for business. Since none of us knew a word of the language, the Captain explained to the Atollians that he would be obliged to interpret it to his "chiefs,"—and the explanation was satisfactory.

Taipu then motioned to Swanson to begin. Then the Captain stood up and rolled off enough vowel-sounding words to fill a dozen or two of the phonograph-cylinders that lay boxed up in the hold of the ship. He did not translate it all, but said:—

"Boys, I 'm tellin' the chiefs what we 've come here for, what we 're going to do for ourselves, and what we 'll do for them; I 've explained about our big guns and

told of their deadly work, and they're pretty well satisfied. I'm askin' 'em to give us a part of the water-front and all of the hills. I think there'll be no trouble."

Then Taipu replied with some vehemence and much pointing toward the hills. At times there was terror in his voice; he seemed to be telling of something that once had happened in the forest. His speech showed that the fear of ghosts is deeply graven in the Atollian mind; that they suspect the dead of much evil; and that men who have eaten their fellows have uneasy consciences.

Taipu's imagination was tropical in the luxuriance of its fears. He peopled the bush with beautiful singing maidens that often lured men into caves, whereupon the maidens became demons that devoured their victims; he gave warnings of tempting game birds that led hunters after them until a certain spot was reached, whereupon the hunters became the helpless quarry; the birds, bands of living devils.

"I tell you of all this truly, to save

your lives," ran Swanson's interpretation of Taipu's warning; "that wood is a place of death, and the devils there have the bones of many of our bravest warriors."

His speech showed the depth of Polynesian fear,—the desolation of that region of the brain that reasons from cause to effect; and, though he heard Swanson's statement that all devils would run from our heavy guns, yet he was full of skepticism, as was shown by his final summing up: "It may be so,—but you have never tried those guns on these devils."

So, with the chief's firm opinion of the worthlessness and danger of the wooded uplands, there was no trouble in bargaining for all of Atollia beyond the beach. The lowlands, also, were generously divided, and the outlines of a compact were soon agreed to by all the chiefs, native and white.

The high cliffs and wooded water-front were ours for the asking. Some of the coast was indented with picturesque sea caves, and studded with peaks that bore

the colors of many centuries of seasoning. The rugged outlines of some of the caverns at the horseshoe bend of the harbor were as beautiful as ever were carved by sunshine and storm, sea-water, and the forces of gravity.

"Now we 'll strike a bargain with these bucks without further parleying," said Swanson, "unless somebody 's got a suggestion to make."

"There seems no way to improve your plans," said Judge Davis, "unless we politely ask them to please get off the island and give us the whole thing."

Swanson then explained that there were beautiful valleys and fertile mesas beyond the bush; great belts of rich soil and vast regions of natural wealth a few miles from the cliffs.

"It 's as hard to get these fellows beyond the beach," said he, "as it would be to get a cowardly fifteen-year-old boy to sleep alone in a haunted house; and we 'll do these chaps a big service to drive out the devils and reclaim the country."

Then we rose to walk through the chief's palm grove and to explore his acres of cocoa trees. My revolver and cartridges felt heavy, and it brought shame to my face to think of our company standing there, armed like pirates. But, after all, these kindly men were man-eaters, and our measures only those of self-protection.

It was agreed that we might land our stores and begin the construction of our buildings at any time.

"Our boats and boatmen will help you," said Taipu; "and if you see anything of ours that you want, it is yours for the taking."

There was some further talk before we started for the beach. Swanson took a beautiful meerschaum pipe from a case he had concealed in his pocket, explained in Atollian that it would soon change from snowy white to a thing of varied colors, and then offered it to Taipu, with many compliments of speech.

To my surprise, that imperious old cannibal glanced at the present for a moment,

wonder and pleasure beaming from his luminous eyes; but he did not reach for it, neither did he appear to notice the gift or the giver's speech,—he affected to overlook it, as if lightly passing over an insult. I thought our Captain had offended him.

"It's a custom of modesty among them," said Swanson, "and they'd die before they'd take a gift at the first offer; but watch him come to his milk when I hold it up again, as if I really meant it; he'll know I'm in dead earnest."

The second offer was made, whereupon the old chief arose with dignity and came forward for the pipe. He filled it with tobacco, and then passed it for the Captain to light.

"That's the height of politeness," said the Reverend Lovejoy.

"It looks so," said Swanson, "but the crafty polygamist wants to make sure it's not poisoned or filled with devils; that's the truth of it."

The Captain smoked of the fresh-lighted pipe, then passed it to Taipu, who enjoyed

a few whiffs before speaking,—and here is Swanson's translation of what the chief said:—

"Now that you have smoked first, and shown that the pipe is free of harm, I find it sweet. May our dealings always be as frank, and our pipes as free of evil."

CHAPTER VIII.

AN ATOLLIAN BRIDAL.

WE started for the beach with pleasant impressions of Taipu's welcome, and with many comforting thoughts of the fair land we had looked upon under such strange circumstances.

"Well, did n't I tell you about right?" asked Swanson, as we left the place of welcome to return to the *Rosalie*.

"It appears even better than you promised," said I, gazing toward the sunlight playing in tropical surroundings; "for nature seems generous, and the blessings that cost dearly elsewhere are singularly free here."

"Yes; the country's all right," replied the Captain, "likewise the people, when you take 'em right. I guess the only

trouble we 'll have will be among ourselves. There 'll be jealousies and all that, but we 'll be happy enough if we only pull together."

"Yes," said Doctor Saville; "all we need is a stable form of government, and a central authority to enforce the laws."

"And I guess the fewer laws we have, the less trouble there 'll be," said Swanson; "at least, nearly all the trouble I 've ever seen has come from too many laws, and from unequal laws. It seems to me, some people worship legislatures, and have as much superstitious faith in them as the islanders have in their stone idols. To my plain notion, if we just run along like a ship's company, only with the comforts and fair winds of the land, instead of those of the sea, I sort of guess nobody 'll be much the loser,—and there 'll be lots of happiness among the people."

We stood waiting for our boatmen to return to the ship with a quantity of fruit. It was a welcome relief to give way for the hour to such primal tastes as rule the simplest races of men. In this country,

nobody was tugging very hard to reach his goal, and nobody was in hot pursuit of fortune or fame, or anything else he imagined essential to success; so we were, naturally, at rest, and soon began to view the surroundings with calmness, as if we were brothers of the mountains and the sea.

"It's a sunny field of life ahead," said our minister; "a spot of rich opportunities for communion with nature."

"Yes; that's a dreamy view," said Doctor Saville; "but the prospect of a land of plenty gives permanency to the outlook."

"For my part," I replied, "I'm only beginning to realize that virgin joy of the senses that travelers say makes life so charming in the South Seas."

And for the moment the beachcomber, clinging to the fertile shores of low islands, seemed a philosopher,—Swanson, greatest of men; for had he not taken us from the retrospect of lost opportunities, and brought us to the country of hope, where every wind seemed fair?

We wandered along the beach for some time, waiting for our boatmen to return. The farther we explored, the stranger our surroundings appeared. For one thing, it seemed as if we had reached the most dreamy spot of the globe, where all things were bathed in sleep and silence. Aside from the cries of strange sea-fowl there was no sound but the breaking of the surf, which fell upon our ears in many voices. Besides the quiet, and the pleasing warmth, —with just a welcome breeze from the sea to tone it,—other things told that we were at the doorway of a world of wonders. The beach was much like many others, only more beautiful than any outside of the South Seas,—but the wonders of the wood crowded close to the shore. Aromatic odors filled the air, and birds of rare plumage came from the palm groves and played in the white sands, venturing to the fringe of the surf. In some places green foliage grew to the edge of the sea, by the broken coral; and back of this picture mountains loomed black and sovereign.

We explored in several directions, finding the inland waters crystal,—and some of the lagoons were full of fish of many colors.

Bananas and cocoanuts grew in profusion; there was an abundance of bread-fruit, dates, figs, and papaya; and with the thought of our cattle, hogs, sheep, and chickens, the prospect was encouraging.

"There are rich bird islands near here," said the Captain, "and we won't be long learning how to fertilize the coral and volcanic soil so it 'll grow our seeds like a regular flower-garden."

"I suppose an ambitious trader would look upon these same beauties and possibilities in a far different spirit from that we bring," said Doctor Saville.

"Faugh!" said Swanson; "and he 'd blight everything he touched, nine times in ten."

"The fact that the natives have but few wants, and that they have the most simple tastes, would seem wrong to a trader," said the Reverend Lovejoy; "for I 've read somewhere that such spots as this are 'cursed

with the mildew of primitive content,'— as if satisfaction with God's universe were not a wise philosophy."

The minister's words furnished food for reflection.

Ours was the one ship in hundreds— possibly the only one—that had ever touched such an island without carrying a band of traders. Other vessels, cruising over the wide Pacific,—even those carrying missionaries,—had often resorted to ingenious methods to stimulate native wants, to the end of selling trifles at large prices, and making "Yankee notions" seem essential to the welfare of the people.

"Why, you know the English bucked up against a stone wall in Africa," said the Captain, "when they had trade schemes afloat. The natives would n't buy what they had no likin' for,—no, sir! and beatin' 'em and jailin' 'em would n't make 'em work, either."

Our boatmen now came with armfuls of luscious fruit, and we were soon hurrying to the ship with glad hearts. And in the

afterglow of that happy day, hope began to take root, and imagination painted bright pictures of the future. Our shipmates rejoiced when we told of the warm welcome we had met ashore, showed them the presents of fruit, and described the beauties of the island. Our evening meal was eaten with lively anticipations of the morrow; and we sat down to our meat and broke bread with rosy pictures in our minds,—the hour full of hope, the air a delight.

That night, large stars studded the deep-blue sky, and a silver moon ripened through the halcyon hours.

The next day we began active preparations for unloading our lumber, papier-mâché sections of houses, carpenters' tools, and the thousand and one things provided for our pioneering. Besides this, there was a lively business of unloading our live-stock, for which ingeniously built bamboo pens had been already made by the natives. Our work went on slowly enough,—no wharf, no conveniences but men's hands, the ship's cranes, ropes, and native boats

with outriggers, that permitted the carrying of great loads without danger from the sea. In all the toil of these enterprises (which, thus quietly beginning, lasted for many weeks), the muscular natives assisted with great skill, and with a heartiness that was encouraging.

By common consent we followed Swanson's leadership as cheerfully as we had followed him on the sea. It was practically his country,—Atollian even seemed his language.

I assisted the Captain in forming a plan to overcome the more serious difficulties of idleness and selfishness in individuals, though we had little of such troubles. The majority subscribed to an agreement that shirkers should be given curtailed rations and increased work, and which provided, also, penalties of imprisonment, just as if the Captain had been disobeyed aboard ship. But few tried to evade their share of the work, and each workman kept busy at something he could do to the best advantage. Each was a partner (which

the hired man is not), and the result was that we were all eager to see production increase, and to contribute our energies to the result.

In this preliminary work we had no regular masters, yet in another sense each fellow was under the eyes of many masters, for every man in the company was a part owner in everything. We saw at a glance that the sloth and bad work of any one of the colonists made waste and inconvenience for all the others; and one or two reprimands, backed by the opinion of those engaged in the work, soon straightened out the drones. In all this (as well as in the labors of after years) there was no race for riches, the only haste being that caused by our necessities, and by the ambition to have conveniences. And, under the plans and sympathies of co-operation, labor became a pleasure,—for many hands made light tasks, and the absence of envy was a harmony in itself. The amount of work to be done at a given time was measured by our needs, which increased

and changed their form with growing leisure and culture.

At the outset, a group of houses was planned near the beach, where there was as fine a prospect as any king would want; and there, amid the groves of palms and bread-fruit trees, surrounded by all the sweet and entrancing influences of nature in a land of miracles, I spent some of the happiest hours that ever have fallen to man.

In all directions was the calm splendor of southern seas, in a land of balmy days and soft nights. No poet could have conjured up a more beautiful scene than that selected for our village. Added to the luster of the dreamy surroundings, there was the constant and inspiring hope of a society without the subordination of classes; and I suppose every man's mind was imbued more or less with the same idea of Utopia that originally fired Swanson, — at least, there was the desire for brotherhood. Starting our careers like a band of Robinson Crusoes, free from contentions

and jealousies, we found few obstacles to prevent the accomplishment of noble purposes. We did nothing alone, or from isolated motives; we wrought as one from the moment of landing. It was decided, without an opposing voice, that if a house were needed, all should join and help to build it,—and any one's cause soon became the cause of all. We felt that it should be so in any well-organized company of people the world over, as the Golden Rule teaches. But selfishness is often as much the symbol of the white man's domination in the virgin isles of the Pacific as in any commercial mart.

It was several days before we had gone far enough in the work of building places for our dumb creatures, unloading our provisions, arranging living-quarters, and getting our materials ashore, to justify carpentering on a scale that would show the natives our purposes and designs; but when sufficient progress had been made to justify active building, and when the olive-colored Atollians began to see our designs in detail,

willing hands among them set to the task of helping us. There were many mechanics and carpenters to direct our men, and the green hands and natives soon became valuable assistants.

I never had done much tinkering as a carpenter (except when I thought I was one, in the venturesome hours of boyhood); but I set about my work with a will, under the guidance of the carpenters. No bird ever built its nest more eagerly than I went at my work. My case was that of many of my fellows; but the sound of shovels and the music of hammering filled the air for many days before we had accomplished much in the transformation of the island.

At the beginning, all were more or less lonely, the married men most noticeably so. Thus we worked diligently to make time fly, and it was a pretty sight to see us struggling to make Atollia a place of happy homes. Fortunately, nature had done so much for the sites, that there was not much leveling or excavating to do; and in heavy work the Atollians were

valuable allies. Muscular, good-natured, and brimming over with curiosity, they found much of interest in our plans. Day after day they brought blocks of coral for the foundations, and patiently they helped to wheel heavy timbers from the beach; and their boating—that was a godsend, without which we should have had perilous delays!

Any man who ever has enjoyed driving a nail into a clean, new plank knows the delight we felt in our first work in this restful country. Every nail was useful, for it meant part of a home; and a human habitation is a place of hopes and fears, of love and tragedy, whether in England or Pitcairn.

The natives viewed our operations with wonder; everything was as new to them as if we had come from another planet. The building instinct was large in them, despite the fact that their ancestors had done their simple building by the same sort of instinct that moves beavers to build dams, or birds to build their nests.

Among those who came to see us at the outset, was Tuna, the modest granddaughter of old Chief Taipu,—for princesses and commoners alike were attracted by our work.

Tuna bore evidences of high breeding. She was by common consent the handsomest native maiden. Scarce eighteen, her tall, willowy form was a picture of grace and beauty. Unlike many of her countrywomen, her oval features were assembled so as to bear a resemblance to the symmetry of the Greek face; and in the rich olive hue of her cheek there dwelt a pleasing dash of color. I thought, as I admired the maiden, rich with the evidences of good health, that I never had seen a more perfect figure of a woman. The thought came that some of her ancestors must have been white; for there was a suggestion that Anglo-Saxon blood lurked somewhere in her veins,—a sort of pilot of heredity to mold her features into a more perfect visage than is given Polynesians.

There was a slight haughtiness in her

demeanor, as there should be in royal blood; and her carriage was dignified enough for any queen. Her feet were like bronze, and her bosom was shapely enough for a sculptor's delight, with breasts like young cocoanuts. She had the most pleasing manner imaginable for a maiden; and I thought how her honest face and comeliness would put to hiding the affected women I had known in many pampered circles. The oftener I compared her with society's garrulous retailers of small gossip, the better I liked Tuna.

Well, there are always events (among all the tribes of men, for aught I know) that intensify acquaintance,—which is only another way of saying that there is fate, or that fixed laws rule the universe. I suppose there were laws of nature directing the course of two of God's creatures in Atollia; for the affairs of the two in question ran without hitch or interruption.

I was learning Atollian fast—and Tuna was mastering colloquial English. You have doubtless observed that some things in this

world are accomplished with little training in language, little instruction from the professors,—the children of all races crying much the same; Love conducting his courts, the world over, without the aid of interpreters. So it fell that Tuna and I got along faster than by any course I ever have seen prescribed by linguists. From the first she seemed sweet enough to eat, and love of her seized me like a fever, making a madman of me in short order. I boldly told her of my feelings, and our first talk was in the alphabet of love.

"I much like to live in new house," she spelt out to me one morning, after papier-mâché strips had begun to cover the framework of my little house,—and from that moment her voice thrilled me, and the dream of her companionship remained. A home with the pretty grandchild of the chief for wife was a plan to put Monte Cristo on his mettle,—and marriage seemed a fit way to crown this strange South Sea venture.

I should say that when I met Tuna first

no woman had any claim on me, neither did the memory of any rise to haunt the hours; so whatever hold she got was that which God intended the fair to have over us men,—perhaps it was a plain, low-down animal impulse; but this I know: the scent of romance and the possibilities of happiness were in it. Up to the hour of our meeting I had lived a lonely life, and the days had been barren of woman's love: so in Tuna I recognized a luring prospect of companionship, the blooming of romance and poetry in my life.

The surroundings were odd, but the old problem of the one man and the one woman was in it, just the same; and in spite of a polygamous ancestry, I found her clinging to the idea of fidelity with as much tenacity as ever dwelt in a white woman's mind. At first I tried to put her love away from me, though she lay close to my heart,—but the want of her would not down; and when I thought of linking my life to hers in the island way,—well, conscience smote me. It was plain that I must have her with the full

Christian title of wife, or give her up; any other course would have disgraced me; so I made an end of it by resolving to follow the inclinations of my heart,—and few things stop a man in such a mood.

There was a shyness about Tuna that any proper man likes, but she never was an Indian cigar-sign of a girl, or a doll-faced creature with the coldness of a chromo; her face showed natural jealousies, passions, hopes, and human feelings. My heart went out to her wholly from the start, and I was as badly turned as any other honest man in love. It now seems that she must have become very dear to me from the first, making herself my most faithful friend, in those strange surroundings, after the day of our meeting. So I soon forgot all about my old home and its hopes; its white faces and civilized customs went from me like the memories of youth. All I knew was, that this Atollian girl was so dear to me that I could not bear the thought of giving her up; and as she seemed every inch a woman, and

the one fated to be my wife, I threw hesitation to the winds. Her odd ways pleased me as a child's ways delight a fond parent, and her little troubles soon became mine; her joys over daily conquests in English, as much my victories as hers. And I forgot all about my mission in the country of her fathers, forgot everything but Tuna; and for us two — for us alone — the world seemed to exist; the people passing impressed us only as pictures, and our love was wealth enough for all the years.

She flitted past from day to day, clad in little besides tapa and flowers (woven into necklaces and clinging wreaths); and when I saw the shine of her body fresh from the surf, there was no suggestion of immodesty in her lithe figure; it was a bit of the symmetry of the surroundings, a part of the elemental beauty of the scene. More clothing would have been a profanation.

From the beginning, as I now look back on the scene, Tuna fell under the spell of new associations, and of the white man whose rude carpentering she viewed with

increasing wonder. She watched me as the sheets of papier-mâché were gradually joined over the rafters; and when I brought the various sections from a formless condition to the outlines of a house, her admiration and awe increased. Even in her untutored breast was that spark of civilization that leads to the admiration of those who can do something useful.

The rumor of our frequent meetings at the place of building, of our walks in the palm groves and by the beach, of our interest in each other's language,—of the soft words and meaning glances between us,—soon reached Taipu's ears, if, indeed, the chief had not read a few things for himself from what he saw during his saunterings. It was plain that love had struck me strong; and I resolved that there could be no real happiness until I should take that maiden for wife, cannibal ancestry and all. The wooing may seem fast to those of my blood, who live in cities and places ruled by the customs of etiquette,—but it was slow for the island life, where

matches are made and marriages consummated in a day.

There was some pity, as well as romance, in our relations. Her father had been dead for many years,—the victim of a war with a rival tribe, when Tuna was but a babe; and Chief Taipu was the only father she ever had known. She was fawn-like and shy, even at her boldest, carrying the modesty of a true princess; and the most I ever could get from her was an occasional word that she loved me, had faith in me, and never could be happy alone,—all this more earnestly than if she had been a girl at home.

We went along for weeks without discussing the time of the marriage; but I think Tuna had looked upon some sort of a union as due about the date of the finishing of the house. I fancy the happy-go-lucky island way was about the most she expected. During all these weeks I thought I was guarding my secret, nursing the main thought close to my heart, as lovers will in every land,—but the

community had really guessed the truth from the outset.

My house was nearly finished, and the natives hovered around with growing curiosity. My fellow-workmen, foreseeing what was in the wind, volunteered to help in the work,—and, taking one thing with another, the situation was interesting. Many colonists were so busy, however, that I seldom met them, unless by chance at meals; these were most often served on the ground, native fashion,—sometimes on rude boards laid on benches. It happened often that I was at Swanson's table, for we had planning and business together. But my talk was usually limited to details of the colony. Several times I started to discuss Tuna, but the old man changed the subject with some adroitness, finally saying, "I have nothing to do with advising young men about love affairs; but I 'll say this: Atollian women are as true as steel."

One morning, shortly after this talk, Swanson came to my house in some trepidation, and called me aside for a private word.

"I come as a message-bearer from Taipu," he said. "It seems that you and that gazelle of a granddaughter of his are gettin' on famously. Well, the chief offers you the girl, and — of course you 'll take her."

"I don't know about that," I said; "nobody's asked for anybody's girl yet, though she 's dear to me, and it may come to a match yet."

"Well," resumed the old man, "you 've lost no time in this courtin', — or so it seems to me, — and now that the offer 's made, I guess you 're pretty near in for it. You see, it 's an insult to refuse such an offer from a chief. To tell you the truth, I 've encouraged this business; for you 'll set a good example, and such unions will make the men happier, as well as bring us closer to these people."

"Then if it 's a critical point of etiquette," I returned, "and if a refusal would cause trouble, I guess I 'd better accept. I can tell you one thing: I love the girl, and I don't want her by the Atollian plan; besides, my desires leap away from any

trifling. It would be a full measure of my love to marry her right; and if I thought she understood it all, I guess that would be my answer."

"Understand!" exclaimed Captain Swanson. "Why she 's as much a woman as your sister,—and these native girls have the instinct of birds about mating."

Just then Tuna appeared, young and full of life; she was singing a native love-song, a picture of innocence as she stood, not far away, with festoons of scarlet flowers in her hair. She hesitated when she saw Swanson; but I beckoned her to come, and bade him question her and interpret my intentions more fully than I could convey them. He asked me what to say, and I told him to explain the meaning of white men's marriage ceremony.

"Tell her the depth of my affection," I said, "and explain that I want her for my wife,—not an island marriage, that people discard like a suit of clothes, but an affair for life. Ask her whether she is ready to take the step."

Swanson fired out a volley of Atollian; it ran so fast I could scarcely catch a word, —but it must have been full of declarations of love. You see, Swanson was in a hurry, —and he did my courting the lightning way, leaving us to spell out the rest at our leisure. All I wanted him to do was to explain the binding nature of the ceremony,—the love part I did not fear.

Tuna hung her head, her brain spinning with such fast love-making. When he had finished, she looked at me with melting eyes that gave answer. The Polynesian fire lit her face, and on the moment she put her arms around my neck and said, "I lovee you,—I be your wifee."

Word of our engagement was sent to Taipu, and there was no lull in preparations for the marriage.

Finally my house was finished, along with many others; and when the right hour came I sent word to Parson Lovejoy that there would be work in his line, and that he had better consult Swanson as to interpreting the ceremony so the

Atollians would understand the rite that was being performed over their country-woman. Meantime, Tuna had not been idle. With the aid of many nimble-fingered maidens, the four plain rooms of that simple shelter were soon transformed into a place of wondrous wreaths, decorations, and garlands of flowers that would make a mid-summer-night's dream of almost any spot you could name.

And we were married on the porch of that plain little cottage, while the afterglow of a bright day was yet luminous. The entire population was there to witness the first Christian marriage on the island, and to hear Swanson repeat in Atollian the white preacher's strange words.

Tuna's dress was chiefly a few folds of tapa-cloth, and many flowers,—mine, a suit of white ducking. The natives were summoned by the fascinating drum-beat of Atollians,—a wild music that thrilled my nerves and filled my mind with pictures of that island's blood-stained and savage past.

I recall little of the scene of the marriage now,—none of the words of the ceremony; but there rises before me the vision of curious faces of white men and brown, of women and children, like pictures in the glowing light of evening. In that retrospect the trusting Tuna rises, clinging to me for life,—a refreshing tropic odor lingering in the breeze, carrying the sound of breaking surf above the words of the minister, as if it were a marriage of the sea.

Then I led away my bride of the ocean, passing the places she had known, and resting at last at Taipu's palm grove, where the marriage feast was prepared,—a simple, impressive affair, followed by an evening of music and dancing on the moonlit beach. All these seemed like a dream, beautiful as the sunny hours of childhood.

At last the hour came for the company to break up and for me to take my bride home. I remember that hour more distinctly than any event of my life,—that hour which meant so much to me and the colony. The stump of a yellow moon hung

low in the sky when we started for our home; its light showed the somber forest plainly, dense on the hillside leading to the west,— growing darker as we entered our cottage for the night. And I often thank God that we went into that little house as we did, after the luckiest and happiest of events. The music and freshness of that holy hour lent their color to our lives and followed us through the years.

CHAPTER IX.

WE FOUND A STATE.

IT was three months to a day after my marriage, when Tuna, looking seaward from our vine-clad veranda, exclaimed, "A sail! a sail!" And when I looked over the sunny sea, the outlines of a ship's topsails were plainly penciled against the tropic sky.

Other colonists were soon astir, for they had seen the same phantom-like sails and rigging looming clear at the sky-line; and in less than ten minutes the principal hill of our village was crowded with eager watchers,—all scanning the first signs of life on that bleak and sailless sea.

It was an afternoon of golden sunlight, and the air was so clear that objects afar stood out in sharp outline; this particular ship, with a distinctness that set our hearts

beating. In the pervading quiet, the sight of a sail was all-absorbing. There was no sound to break the silence of the deep forest, save perhaps the occasional song of a bird. The blue surge melted to foam on the coral beach, and white birds wheeled slowly through the dome of summer sky,—the surroundings a frame for the picture of peace.

O'Fallon and his crew were due any day, for he had been away more than four months on his memorable voyage to San Francisco, whither he had gone for colonists' families and a cargo of stores. As we stood peering eagerly to make out the ship, every watcher hoped the craft was laden with loved ones on their way to Atollia. Slowly that apparition of the horizon came toward us, growing larger as day waned, until at last the ensign streamed from her mainmast, and her topsails were plain against the field of blue.

"Yes; she 's the *Rosalie*," said Swanson, after a long, steady look through the glasses; "or she 's a mate for her, to a dead certainty."

There was excitement among the colonists, as well as among the natives. To the former, it was the thrill of joy at the prospect of pressing the lips of loved ones; to the natives, it was a devouring curiosity to see women with faces as white as the beach, eyes the color of the sky, and hair like sunlight tangled in the woods at early morn. Then followed that glow of good feeling which comes of the hope of companionship to men who have been long in lonely surroundings. Added to this, there was that sense of well-being which goes with the comforts of life; for the safe arrival of our little ship meant goods, wares, and merchandise of many varieties, besides more lumber, seeds, agricultural implements, and other devices for the betterment of our condition. So, taken as a whole, every prospect was encouraging to our eager crowd.

As we watched, suddenly there burst from the approaching ship a cloud of smoke, which hovered for a moment, then melted into empty air. It was followed by a heavy

roar that rose above the thundering of the surf,—and when three such sounds of cannonading had filled the air, we knew the *Rosalie* had returned; for such a firing of salutes was the signal that had been agreed upon to announce that she was home again.

Cautiously O'Fallon piloted the way until the *Rosalie* lay safely at anchor at the place of her original mooring. It was nearing sunset, but Captain Swanson and a dozen men rowed to the vessel to meet the newcomers with words of welcome, and to bring news of their condition to those who waited on the shore.

O'Fallon reported a safe, fast voyage; no sickness aboard; no mishaps of any character,—only rioting, strikes, and starvation for many thousands in the United States,—the old story of masses and classes at war.

A glance showed that the ship carried a fair load. Furniture, bicycles, machinery, and brick and cement for the arsenal and warehouse, were a large part of the cargo.

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

Four school teachers and two doctors were among the passengers, and they told Swanson they were glad to escape from the rigors of competitive civilization, and to cast their fortunes with Atollians.

As there had been no sickness or other misfortune among us, the Captain gladdened the hearts of many wives and children with news of the good health of their husbands and fathers.

Suddenly, day melted into darkness with the swiftness of a shadow, and with the night breeze blowing the sea into gentle ripples, the visiting company departed for the shore to prepare for landing passengers and stores early the next morning. The men waiting on the beach rejoiced over the good news from their families. From some of the women came hurriedly written words of love for their husbands; others sent mementoes of their affection,—one I remember, the picture of her babe, to show its father how much it had grown since he had seen it; so, altogether, it was a time of happiness such as one seldom sees.

Tuna was delighted with the many evidences of wifely affection; and the girls of the village, some of whom had looked with hopeful glances upon our unmarried colonists,—upon the others, too, I must say,—took heart of hope that they might find loving husbands among our white men, known in Atollia as "children from the land of ships."

After the women, children, and new colonists had been safely landed, there was much work of preparing for their temporary comforts; but the weather was so benign, the site of our village so convenient, that it was easy to put up tents and swinging hammocks for those who could not find quarters in the six or seven vacant houses of the settlement.

In less than a week a large quantity of lumber, and many additional papier-mâché sections of houses, were landed, and ten or twelve dwellings were soon furnished for occupancy. From that time the construction of houses went forward at the rate of four a day, until our town numbered

seventy-five homes, — many nestling picturesquely in bowers of hibiscus and wild vines.

From the day of landing, our relations with the child-like savages had been far pleasanter than any I had ever heard of under like circumstances. There had been no clashing, because civilization, for once, refused to pounce down upon the innocent with modern guns; and we neither tried to conquer and plunder them, nor to convert them to a religion they could not understand. For another thing, we were not there to barter beyond our necessities; and for every benefit we asked, we cheerfully granted a greater blessing. We taught them how to till the soil and raise live-stock; showed them how to provide in the hour of prosperity against the misfortunes of the future; and they lived better after they had adopted our methods than at any golden age of their history. To their taro and yams, turtle-food, fish, and bread-fruit — which we ate with a relish — we added pork and beef, chickens, vegetables, and

the wheat foods. Though their tastes ran to simple dishes, they soon learned to like our cooking, and to look upon us as marvelous producers. I think one reason for their high esteem was that we treated them as equals, and refrained from wounding their feelings. Swanson knew they were sensitive and proud-spirited, and he directed us aright from the start.

The white men's wives readily became accustomed to new surroundings, and learned to like Tuna and her associates, many of whom, by this time, spoke and understood English fairly well. To some of the colony women, the world here (for the first time) offered a bountiful table, a roof-tree, and that feeling of security which comes from the knowledge that daily bread will be forthcoming. But it took some of them a long time to understand that loaves and fishes were divided among us after a plan of justice,—to each, in a manner, according to his needs. In the background was the ever-present hint, however, that if a man would not work, neither

should he eat. To the children of the colonists (those, especially, who had dwelt in alleys, and lived on short rations) the village was a perpetual playground; over it they romped with unabated joy and rosy health, every fear of want driven from their lives.

The most important event, after the arrival of men's families, was a concert of music in Chief Taipu's palm grove. It consisted of singing by natives and whites, of fluting, cornet solos, etc., by some of our musicians, and of such music as violins and wind-instruments afforded in the hands of amateurs. The music was not so important, however, as a surprise that came as a sort of dramatic interlude,—a leaf torn from the book of life, and held up for us to read.

During a brief intermission there fell upon our ears a buzzing of native voices in the direction of the musicians' platform, and from an aisle in the palm grove there came a bevy of brown maidens, followed by some of our young men. It was the

opinion of all that we were about to be favored with a song; but appearances were misleading, for a bit of human life—far more important than the music of a happy company—ruled the stage for the hour. The true situation was explained by Parson Lovejoy in these words:—

"Ladies and gentlemen, I ask your indulgence for a few minutes, while I perform a simple ceremony that will add six husbands and six wives to our happy village. This may surprise some of you, but it should not; for love ever has been the religion of humanity; without it, the heart of the world would wither. These young people have before them the encouraging example of Mr. Hadley and his dutiful wife, and the colony will be fortunate if such marriages become the rule."

Then followed a simple ceremony, whereby six men were married to six women,—and the concert was not resumed until natives and whites had congratulated those who had given us the surprise. A feast and dance in the full moonlight followed

on the beach. I am glad to record the fact that those unions proved a success, and that many happy marriages resulted from the example. In less than a year the only marriageable white women among us (three girls, of not more than eighteen years) were wedded to three brothers, after which every union was necessarily with Atollian women.

After two months of well-directed labor under the management of the carpenters and builders, the village was richer by four useful structures,—a large warehouse, a schoolhouse of six rooms, a town hall (designed for use, also, as a court of justice), and a building that served at once as a fort and an arsenal. Every man that could be spared from the fields and other work of production aided more or less in the labor of building these community structures. The natives rendered much aid in the business of carpentering.

The first brick structure was a large warehouse designed to hold machinery, ammunition, and general supplies. Though

many articles of use and beauty had already been stored in houses, there remained thousands of valuables to be disposed of so as to guarantee their safety; these were placed in the warehouse. Besides steam-engines and agricultural implements, there were sewing-machines, nearly a hundred bicycles, many guns, a few typewriters, a quantity of machinists' and carpenters' tools, and I know not what stocks of groceries, dry-goods, and wearing-apparel.

The warehouse was the safest place for the common supply of creature comforts, and they remained there until the goods could be segregated and transferred to separate village stores, which were conducted by the community.

The town hall was made of lumber, galvanized iron, and bamboo, with a native thatched roof,—a strange composition of many rude styles of architecture; and the arsenal, which was of quite solid masonry, was a perpetual wonder to the natives, and a fortress of safety to the village. It was of stone foundation for the first two feet,

sunk into the lava soil; above that, for some distance, it was made solid, with thick walls of coral and lime and sand, all skillfully mixed so as to form a surface of the hardness of granite. This was the material to a height of twenty feet. Above, there was a turret-shaped tower of brick, with many suitable openings for firing at any enemy that might come within range.

The fort stood at the apex of a hill that commanded a valley near the wood, which was conveyed to us by Taipu's original treaty. To us, that forest carried no other fear than that which belonged to it as the possible lurking-place of predatory enemies or wild animals; but the Atollians feared it as children fear bogy men. The silence and mystery of the jungle were awe-inspiring to all of us, as such untrodden wilds ever are to men of imagination; but to the natives they were absolutely terrifying,—places abounding in cannibal enemies and haunted by the footsteps of ghosts. Even when the fort was almost finished, and when the surroundings were patrolled by brave

guards, it was with fear that brown men carried the polished slabs of coral from the beach to the workmen. The soft, cool mornings brought the terrors of fright to their souls, as if the breezes might waft to their ears the death-cry of trapped victims in the jungle.

When the fort was finished, most of our ammunition and rifles were stored there; and some of the cannons and rapid-fire guns were placed where they would be most useful in checking an outbreak. By order of Swanson, six men were detailed for guard duty at the fort. A telephone line connected the guards' quarters with the town; and this protection lasted until a more permanent system was adopted by the people.

I do not know just how long our village might have existed as a mere pioneer outpost, had not some ambitious soul suggested the founding of a permanent organization with the attributes of a state.

It was Judge Davis who first grasped the problem in its entirety, and took steps to bring order out of our peaceful chaos;

and when he had fully stated the reasons for forming a rational government, I saw the advantage of the scheme, and I joined him with hearty good will. A hasty consultation showed that it was advisable to explain our views to Swanson and Taipu, to avoid envy or suspicion. To this end we arranged a conference at Taipu's native house. That there might be the fullest expression of opinion, the question of organizing a state was canvassed with the people, and ten representatives were chosen from the ranks of the colonists; and when we convened, there was the best of good feeling among all classes. The chief was accompanied by ten or fifteen native advisers.

The time of this eventful council was a glorious night of stars, with a dreamy moon later, and our business was dispatched around a large table in the ancient feast-room, a rising breeze from the sea refreshing the air. As we sat discussing the building of a free state in these cannibal surroundings, my eyes fell upon an assortment of stone images, spears, slings, daggers made

of sharks' teeth, and poisoned arrows, in the background,—dread reminders of our bloodthirsty neighbors. I shuddered at the thought that the man-eating spirit was latent in the very air.

Swanson rapped us to order and explained the purpose of the meeting, repeating the gist of his words in English.

"Men, we 're here to see about launching the new ship of state," he said; "and it 's proper and sailor-like to see her start right. Now, if she was a real ship for sailin' in salt-water, instead of down the stream of time, I might be of some use; but here 's where we need lawyers to guide us, and we 've got 'em right here to speak. I 'm sure they 're honest, and the prosperity of this country is close to their hearts;—so we 'd better listen to what they say. But I 've just one word, myself, before they begin, though perhaps I 'm intrudin' my opinion. It is this: in all we do, men, let us remember our promises to these good natives,—first, because it 's right, and then again, because if we start them against us, they 'll boil hell

down to a half-pint, and give us a battle to the death. I think our laws should protect them as fully as they protect us; and let us act so that shame will never come to us or our children."

Then he explained the nature of white men's governments, the business of lawyers and courts, and the fact that the administration of justice and the guaranty of fair dealing are the aim and function of governments and laws. He used some rough illustrations, and the chief and his advisers were pleased with the speech.

"Taipu, we know this is all new to you," he said, at last, "and it will pertain more to our people than to yours; but we have begun our dealings in a fair, open-handed way, and we don't want you to imagine we would hold underhanded meetings. By the treaty, our governmental affairs may be conducted in any way we see fit, so long as we do not interfere with you and your people; but we are glad you have honored us with your presence, and we hope you will like our laws."

Taipu rose with dignity, made the polite Atollian royal bow, and replied as follows: "Taipu and his people love the honest white men and their way of doing things, that no others can do,—none but the gods. Their hogs are juicy, and much fat is on the ribs of our people because they have sucked the sweetness from the white man's food. Our young men are plowing and sowing the fields, and our daughters are happy at white men's tables, upsetting our religion by eating at the same board with their husbands. These new customs we have seen prosper in houses of happiness. In spite of our old women and the witch-doctors, no evil eye has fallen upon us, and the white man's touch has not withered the cocoa-palms and the yams.

"Taipu and his people are proud and full of faith; so I say that your laws shall be our laws, and we render gratitude that we are here to listen to speeches of wisdom. It may be that our deified fathers —those who passed into the deep earth when the sea was young, and who now

watch us,—are using your tongues to teach us the way of right."[1]

When Taipu had finished, there was no further waste of breath in compliments or parleying; we fell to the business of the council, Swanson acting as interpreter. Judge Davis sounded the note of wisdom, and made the first speech.

"We stand at the cradle of this little nation," he said, "and we owe a duty to ourselves and to posterity. You have all heard that a tree will be inclined the way the twig is bent in youth; and that old saw should be applied to government. Then what is our status? We are wholly unorganized; in such a condition any of the great or small powers of the world might discover this island, declare us lawless adventurers, and absorb us without difficulty."

"Do you hold that we could prevent such a catastrophe by laws?" asked Parson Lovejoy.

[1] It is difficult to translate South Sea languages into English, but the rendering conveys the thought, as nearly as I am able to translate it.

"Yes, sir," replied the Judge; "beyond all doubt. I am trying to point out that there is a way to get a standing with nations."

Doctor Saville thought the point should be explained; so the Judge said: "It is something like this: International law recognizes the sovereignty and rights of states; but it does not give to castaways the dignity of statehood, especially when they have not taken any steps to show that they ever regarded themselves as a sovereign power. Now, we are undoubtedly a community of very earnest and very good people, and we are living peacefully, within certain well-defined limits of territory. To that extent we have the general features of a state; but many elements are lacking. We are not living under a permanent organization which aims to secure the prevalence of justice by self-imposed laws. Until we go that far, until we take steps to found a living political state, with a fixed government as its organ to administer justice,—well, I 'm sorry to say we

cannot expect to have any standing in the eyes of the world. We should have nothing to lean upon."

"If there 's any likelihood of any damned old warship nosin' around these waters, and layin' a claim that we 're heathens in need of bein' governed," said Swanson, "then for God's sake let 's plant our flag so deep and strong that we 'll not be prey for any of them."

"Captain Swanson is right," exclaimed Doctor Saville; "and I 'm for having Judge Davis draw the plans and architectural designs for the state of Atollia. Hadley, how does it strike you?"

Thus addressed, I could not remain silent, so I chimed in with the Judge's views, saying, "I 'm in accord with Judge Davis. There are international and social reasons why we should assume the rights and duties of an independent state. As we grow richer and stronger, there will be need of a government worthy of our condition,—a sovereign that all men can look up to as the seat of justice. We must not

forget that law cannot be pushed aside; it is the order that pervades and controls the universe, and none can escape its jurisdiction. Since this is true, there should be an intelligent and responsible moral power to administer it, even in the smallest community.

"Coming to the international question, it strikes me that we should prepare for the day of larger relations; we cannot live always in this undiscovered happiness. If we become a sovereign state, the world (if it discovers us) will regard us as just as large in equality as any nation under the sun; for old and young, large and small, monarchies and republics, stand as equals before the law of nations."

There was not a dissenting voice; so it was decided to call an early meeting at the town hall, to give the people a chance to form themselves into a state, by adopting a constitution and developing their ideas into the full machinery of a government. I have always held that the state was really formed the moment our views became

unanimous at that original conference,—for to speak of liberty, to move as one, under the inspiration of freedom, is to found a state.

If it be true that the constitution of the oak tree is indelibly written in the acorn, which contains the sailing-chart for centuries of growth, then the organic law of Atollia was latent in our minds that night, and the state sprang into being the hour of our conference. Its leaves and branches may grow for ages; it may blossom into complex flowers of liberty in years to come, —but it was founded at that first council. The embryonic empire was quickened into life in the flower-scented air of Chief Taipu's feast-room, among the heathen images, as I have stated,—and the business was well done.

Before we departed for the place of the founding, Taipu showed his appreciation. He said, "We trust the white men, though we never have seen the great nations they fear. To-night we shall pray to all our gods to make the white man's plans prosper

until this land sinks into the sea it rose from when the first men were young."

The moon was bright in the west when we went forth from the council. There was a thundering sound of breakers in the night air, and the breath of flowers was in my path as I walked through a wood of toa to meet Tuna at the gate of our happy home.

CHAPTER X.

OUR FLAG OF JUSTICE.

IT was in the temperate and flower-scented air of that glorious island that less than two hundred souls met to complete the founding of a state, and to select a flag that would be the symbol of political and industrial freedom. Human ambition never coveted a fairer purpose in a fairer land, and our hopes were quickened in the romantic surroundings, — a forest of palms.

In the colorless light of morning, with just a bloom of pink on the luminous mountains beyond the brimming bay, we were summoned to the place of meeting by the ringing of a church bell, which never, surely, had sounded for a holier purpose, — the founding of a government

to carry out the doctrines of peace on earth and good will among men.

The calendar marked December 20th, but the odor of wild lemons and the sight of delicate growing things told that winter was but a name.

Amid the sweetest influences of nature our state was formed; and justice was the altar before which we bowed. It was the fittest of places for the cradle of a nation. The birds sang, the surf boomed, and the sun fell like a halo on our natal day.

Taipu and his followers left us to our deliberations, while they pursued their games and feasts undisturbed; but Tuna and many other native women sat and watched us in our counseling. It was a striking contrast of simple and complex races pursuing their paths of life side by side. Upon each the surroundings made the impressions peculiar to the mental development of the people. To the wild Atollians, the wood just beyond our hall was a place of gloom and fear,—an enchanted spot where every tree held a devil; to us, it

breathed the spirit of poetry and freedom, as to the men who worshiped in primeval forests when the race was young.

Within our little world, affairs of state went forward with as much precision as if we had been in Boston, Philadelphia, or New York. Even if our Independence Hall was at the remotest end of the earth, it was our temple of freedom, just the same. In its holy aisles we dedicated ourselves to the cause of liberty; civilization flowered, and "the city of God on earth, with its walls of jasper and its gates of pearl," seemed near at hand, although just beyond the thin walls of our meeting-house the forest lay dark and terrible, with its mysteries of cannibalism and its rites of savagery,—as if the barbaric past were looking in upon us through the same open windows that brought to our ears the sound of the sea and to our nostrils the breath of a tropical forest.

On the second morning of meeting, the constitution of Atollia became a living law. A white banner, with one blue star in the

center, was made our flag, and Captain Swanson was unanimously elected President, with an advisory board to confer with him on matters of state.

At the end of these deliberations, President Swanson offered a resolution declaring the gold and silver coin of the United States of America the lawful money of Atollia. It was adopted without a dissenting vote.

"I now ask that an adjournment be taken until ten o'clock to-morrow," he said; whereupon a motion to that effect was made and carried.

Before the colonists dispersed, however, the President said, "I should like to have the superintendent of census furnish me the name of every person in the state, that I may refer to it in the morning."

"The list was finished yesterday," said Randolph, "and it will be at the service of the President at any time."

We lingered for a time to greet the President as our formal leader. He gave an ear to every little compliment, carrying his honors with pleasing dignity.

Before the next meeting was rapped to order the hall was comfortably filled. The only white persons not present were six or eight guards, who were at the moment on duty at the fort; for a rumor had gone out that the President would outline his policy, though nobody knew its character. In this mental attitude, curiosity intensified suspense, and it was an expectant and eager audience that awaited the new ruler's declarations concerning his purpose.

Finally the rotund figure of Swanson became visible through a side door that led to the speaker's platform. At sight of him we broke into cheering, just like any other noisy and eager throng. But when the tumult and bustle had died away, when the last shout was cut short at a wave of the Captain's hand, the business of the day was on.

"I have called you here, my good people," said Swanson, "to say that I want this state to succeed, and I want its people to be happy. Well, I guess you know that already; but I 've been a business man

with a dash of success in my time, and I know that bartering 's a hard way to do business. A man has n't always got a hog to swap for his neighbor's calf, and if he 's got no money, he has to do business on credit. Now, credit 's a bad thing, for it leads to extravagance and misunderstandings; so we need money to carry on our business. Well, as I 've started out to treat you all handsome, I guess I 'd better keep on. If you 'll excuse me a minute, I 'll explain my meanin' in full."

The Captain then stepped to a door off the platform, and said, "Boys, roll her in!"

Instantly, four men wheeled in a truck, on which were piled many bags of gold and silver. There was the greatest buzzing of voices imaginable, but silence ensued when the leader came forward to speak again.

"I want the census-taker and the men who have charge of this money," he began, "to call off the names, and give every white person in Atollia one thousand dollars, with my compliments. The natives don't know what money is, and they would n't

know what to do with it if they had it,—but we 'll treat them right some other way."

Though the gift was like the man, we were hardly prepared for such a turn, and the effect of the announcement was aptly described by a woman who sat near me, as "decidedly rejuvenating." It was like a burst of sunshine after a month of rain, though the coin stood for little more than a symbol that had always meant comfort in other lands. As the business proceeded, curiosity gave way to joy, and a group of agitated faces showed the depth and buoyancy of our happiness.

After a brief interval of silence, one of the school teachers made a graceful speech of thanks and appreciation, concluding with a proposal of cheers for the President. There followed a heartiness of cheering that did our souls good.

"I thank you," said Swanson; "but I 'm only doin' my duty,—that 's all."

He then whispered with the census-taker for a moment, scanning a list of names. "I have the names of those now on duty at

the fort," he said. "They shall have their money the very moment they are off duty, so they can stow it away."

For more than two hours the paymasters were busy at their task; and it was an odd sight to see new silver pieces and yellow gold piled high on the table where the cashiers did their counting. After the jingling had ceased, we were called up in alphabetical order, and each was handed his part of the "great divide."

The sight of so much money made people's eyes glisten, just as an old toper's mouth "waters" at sight of rum; but as I saw the distribution (and even when I carried away my heavy load of coin), I thought what dross it was; for our cups of happiness had already brimmed high without the aid of gold,—and the sight of money recalled many bitter struggles and memories, and there was a brooding fear that gold might bring evil to our community. As if to accentuate this fear, some of the faces attested that poverty and its empty days had stupefied and dwarfed

faculties meant for higher development. The crimes of civilization had left their scars on many of our people.

Our state was by common consent modeled after the framework of the Federal government of the United States of America, with many principles extended to meet the problems of later times. Though we were in a place of feasting, where a temperate and sensible pursuit of wealth brought everybody enough to eat, drink, and wear, we drew our organic law with an eye to a future in which conditions of unequal wealth might readily arise. We sterilized the seeds of monopoly in advance.

"Let us not allow the noise and trumpeting of our success to blind us to the dangers of the future," said Judge Davis; "for when the tumult and the shouting of our passing day have ceased, posterity will have to face the old problem of making the loaves and fishes go round. If we let things run themselves, as so many governments of the Old and of the New World have done, they will run to the devil."

So it was our constant endeavor to prevent property from becoming the possession of the few, while power was the possession of the many. We recalled Lincoln's words, uttered when he feared the day that all the wealth of America would be in the hands of the few,—a fear that unnerved him, and caused him more anxiety than anything during the Civil War. So we sought by every device of law, and by such statesmanship as we could summon, to provide for the continued diffusion of wealth, without destroying any proper freedom of the masses.

Our hardest fight was with the pure socialists (led by Doctor Saville), who stubbornly contended that the government ought to make everything, from a box of matches to a bicycle.

The problem was to keep wealth moving among the people in such a way as to prevent the abuses of monopoly. We managed our affairs so well, however, that the state controlled many departments of industry and trade, with marked benefit to

the general progress; but the state acted in this field only under the pressure of necessity, and to prevent injury by private capital and enterprise.

Under such circumstances, every attempt to extend the dominion of the state beyond the bounds I have outlined was resisted by the people as an infringement on their liberties. They refused to vest the necessary authority in the administration to carry out anything like an extensive state socialistic programme.

Despite his growing love of power, which increased with the coming of age, Swanson opposed every attempt or suggestion to strengthen the army, or to extend the functions of the state into realms of general commerce.

"Do you believe we should make Atollia a military government?" I once asked him, after there had been some such suggestions by the ambitious.

"Never," he replied; "for that would be too much like rulin' by force. Did you never notice that soldiers are not good for

anything else? An army 's simply a fightin'-machine,—that 's all. Soldiers can't have opinions of their own; they must act as if every devil of 'em believed the same thing,—and that thing 's the commander's word. And I tell you I did n't come here to start a tyrant's government. The people must be allowed to think,—and thought would destroy an army."

"Let us try to carry the religion of the immortal Declaration into industrial life," was Doctor Saville's contention, though his plans were sometimes rather vague.

"That and the Golden Rule will make this country a paradise," added Parson Lovejoy.

"However difficult it may be to equalize industrial conditions in a large country," held Judge Davis, "we may be able to establish a just system of work and wages in a small community like this; and if we start on sound principles, the benefits of our work may go down the ages. Anyhow, let us aim high; let us aim at the sun, even if we hit only a rail fence."

Such sentiments animated everybody at the convention, and there was unity from the beginning, except, for a time, as to methods.

"All men are free and equal, just as they are in America," I said; "but everybody over there admits the harsh destiny of the masses; so I think we should make the pursuit of happiness easier by putting the iron heel of the law squarely upon the sharks of commerce. Let us have an income tax, for one thing; and suppose we make it easy for everybody to get a home, and unlawful for any man to sell his homestead."

There was not much delay in settling these provisions, for they appealed to the masses as equitable and practicable.

"Poverty seems as far away from us as the Day of Judgment," said Judge Davis; "but the advisory board has conceived the happy plan of providing for the future by setting aside a domain where the unfortunate will be able to earn their way in the world."

"As we have about everything we need

ourselves," returned Doctor Saville, "let us show that we are humane enough to look out for posterity. The proposition pleases me and my friends, and we are ready to hear it in detail."

The audience was silent, for this provision was the last important principle incorporated into our laws. Even the humblest man appreciated the fact that we were the fathers of the country; and there was something solemn in our making provision for the unborn.

"There may come a time in the distant future," said Judge Davis, "when the poor will overrun this fair land, for no human society has yet been devised where all were shod and housed and fed through the ages; so it is wise to provide against the wolf at the door."

Many vital problems were disposed of in the first days of the government. And as we sat at our loom weaving the fabric of a state that was to last, we strove to cut all defective threads. The work was pleasant, the glow of hope over it all.

To recur to the Judge's argument, this was its essence: "If the citizen stands ready to surrender his life to his country in the hour of its peril, the country should afford the citizen a chance to earn a living when he is crowded to the door of want.

"It is the duty of the state to take care of defectives, delinquents, and dependents, but the poorhouse plan is bad; it should be supplanted by the army of industry, composed of those who have failed to make their way in the world. The worthy unemployed should be placed where they can earn their living under government direction.

"The state should furnish fertile lands, machinery, capital, and expert business management for those able to produce creature comforts. The labor of such willing hands, backed by governmental management and capital, would soon solve the problem of homeless and hungry men and women. It would give little children bread and homes and schools; and a few hours devoted to productive industry each day would bring food and shelter for all. The

poor would be herded into a co-operative commonwealth, where pure state management would be applied to a specific class, in a limited area."

In spite of some opposition, provisions of the character conceived by Judge Davis were set forth in our constitution.

Before a year, we found ourselves face to face with delicate problems; for human nature contains restless elements, and fault-finding is in its composition.

"If God had only made our people as gentle as the climate," I said to Swanson one day, after a little row at a town meeting, "we might avoid such disturbances."

"Still, it 's better 'n anything we 've ever seen elsewhere," he returned; "but a state 's a state, whether in Lapland or the South Seas, and I suppose there 'll be trouble so long as everybody has a voice in everything. It 's like all the deck-hands tryin' to run a ship, — and 't won't do, at all."

"Then you believe the rulers ought to have more power?" I asked.

"That 's the point," said Swanson ; "give 'em a firm grip while they 're in, so that their rules will be like the order of a military officer. If you don't vest power in your rulers, you can't have a strong policy."

"And yet you opposed Doctor Saville's state socialism, which gave the state more power?" I asked.

"I 'm against it," he said, "because it 's not needed in this country, whatever other countries may need. It would take too many mathematicians to figure up whether one fellow had hoed a hill of beans more 'n another,—and they 'd fight if they were paid differently. Life 's too short to fool with such folderol in a country where there 's no labor problem."

In the light of history, there was much sense in the Captain's observations, for there was never a day in Atollia when any man really feared poverty. The work was easy, and care and worry were thrown to the winds. For this reason, among others, there was no uncertainty or disorder in our

work, which was often made easy by the aid of natives. The men frequently worked together, hence there was little loneliness,—and the rush and strain we had known in other lands never marred the social life.

Even under these pleasant conditions it was some time before the haunted look of fear—fear for the future—wholly faded from the faces of men whose past had been in surroundings of hunger and want; but the stamp of courage finally appeared, and they went to their work with a will. They succeeded because advantages were better than the rest of the world offered. Perhaps this offends some hopeful American whose life has fallen in pleasant places, and who thinks his native land fulfills the rosy promises of its youth. But every student of recent history knows that the United States are reaching Old World conditions rapidly. It may be very well for political orators to boast that there is a chance for everybody in America; they know better. It may be all right for Americans to talk of "room at the top"; but they do not speak of the

desolation and hopelessness of the struggle presented in the case of the average man,— they hide the facts under a veil of words.

"Where capital forms itself into monopoly, and strives for special privileges in the business of making money," said Judge Davis, "let the state conduct the enterprise, whether it 's a street-railroad or gas-works. It would be a progressive step in the line of promoting the general welfare. Whenever private enterprise clogs the diffusion of wealth, and plucks the golden fruit from the tree of opportunity, it is the duty of the state to conduct that enterprise in the interest of the masses. We do not want to inhibit individual capital and enterprise, but we must impress them into the service of the commonwealth. The passive policy of letting things alone has its limit, and there are times when the state must handle questions unflinchingly."

The Judge's plans became a part of our policy, which may be one of the reasons we were always so moderate and sensible in our commercial life; for no man ever

was known to kill himself in Atollia in the mad struggle for millions.

It was the Sage of Concord who aptly said there should be temperance in making cloth, as well as in eating. We agreed that a man should not be a silkworm, nor a nation a tent of caterpillars. So we decided that the corner-stone of our political economy should be the Emersonian purpose,— the care and culture of men. We thought the prevention of poverty and crime was wiser and easier than handling them when they appeared. We held that there could not be oppressive inequalities of wealth if monopolies were prevented. Under such laws there was no sweating and groaning under a weary life of unrequited toil.

At the end of two years in this idyllic land of sunshine and strange people, we found ourselves as happy as any other crowd of reef-rovers in the entire belt of the South Seas. The problems of food and comfort that knocked at the door of the great outside world for solution were unknown to us. Our troubles pertained to

our isolated surroundings, and were petty, compared with the world's great worries. How to develop our resources for the needs of a high civilization; how to build a state for posterity, without overlooking the needs of the passing hour,—these were some of our problems. Yes; and there was the constant fear that our people might divide into contending factions, and rend society asunder by their jealousies and bickerings.

Our fears caused us to provide many safeguards against state aggression on the proper rights of individuals. At the door of the home the state's power was at an end, except in its general supervision, as in all civilized lands.

How silently my life glided in Atollia,—from the memory of my struggles in San Francisco,—from care and warping poverty to a regal condition! And as I sit here now, where summer airs are ever blowing, it seems hard to realize how unhappy I was before I saw these southern seas flashing in the sun.

As I sit recalling those pleasant times,—the full, ripe days when I was first happy with Tuna, and at peace with my surroundings,—the past rises before me, so hallowed, so invested with the glamour of romance, that I can see it only as a pleasant waking dream. But the charm of incident is here forever new, rising like a picture of growing beauty, like the glory of music.

Atollia seems ever young; life, a perpetual revelation. When I try to recall my lonely, fruitless years at the bar,—in the discouraging days before I ever heard of Swanson,—it seems that those experiences must have come to me in another life; for my happiness here seems separated from all past existence by such a gulf that the space is like that between worlds.

CHAPTER XI.

OLD BILL BANKS.

YEAR after year our lives ran as quietly as a summer vacation in a land of flowers, with little to interrupt the serenity of our island world. Day after day of peaceful skies and delicate airs, the tides "brimmed into the bay" and filled the lagoons, the palms gave their refreshing shade, and the nights were bright with stars, the sea glimmering with their reflections.

Atollia grew more beautiful as time passed, until the village stood, at last, a picturesque group of homes, breaking the monotony of nature's vast and lonely wilds. Around us savagery lay hid and expectant, now ruled by superstition, the next moment copying our methods and playing at the arts of culture.

With the tints of fairyland floating in varied hues, from the shining surf on shores of coral and sand, to the brilliant greens, penciled blues, and somber purples of the mountains, there was every range of color and inspiration to delight the soul.

It was a prosperous and happy colony that dwelt like brothers by the pulsing tides of a dreamy island world,—yet trouble was not to be wholly banished from our Eden by the sea. The weaknesses of man, and the conflict of the new and the old, were in the cards; so we had to reckon with currents and storms beyond the limits of our own society.

There were fewer dissensions among our people than the most sanguine had expected. Our population was so small that there was no scarcity, "no pressure on nature's power of affording subsistence," as Doctor Saville put it; so anything like hard times was unknown to the inhabitants of Atollia. Crops thrived, industry outran our needs, justice prevailed without

appealing to courts, and the natives waxed fatter than ever before in their history.

In spite of these favorable conditions, however, secret influences were at work to cause us some trouble. As events will show, the natives were ever under the spell of fear. Occultism pervaded every nook and cranny of their lives, and the rankest superstitions ruled them when we thought them happy, prosperous, and on the highway to civilization.

My eyes were opened to real conditions in a way the most sudden. I came out on my veranda one bright morning when the sky was still rosy with the colors of dawn, and beheld a sight that cast a fear upon me that I cannot compare to anything so well as to the discovery of a burglar in one's house.

You should understand that Atollia was like a great family, savages and all, and that strangers were never seen, even in the remotest places. If we did not know the natives by name, their faces were familiar, and they were at all times deferential and docile.

The morning in question I beheld a powerful man walking quietly by a copse of young trees. A swift, clear river divided my cottage and the greensward of the village from the place where I first saw him emerging from the grove.

By his walk and stature he was a stranger, and when I clapped a pair of field-glasses to my eyes, a giant sprang before its lenses. His naked trunk was tattooed in several colors, which glistened brighter than the glow of his body; his face was covered with a cropped stub of beard, and there was a look of determination in his grim countenance. He wore a rare cloak of yellow bird feathers, which I did not observe at first, so carelessly was it slung over his naked shoulders. From the great value of such feathers, I knew the wearer was a person of rank and influence; for few except princes wore such insignia as garments made of the feathers of the *oie* bird. In all the South Seas such raiments are mantles of the great.

But the thing that troubled me most

was what followed. Fully twenty Atollians passed before the stranger as if in fear. They saluted him with a strange manner of obeisance, and their speech came to me so broken by the distance that I could catch no full sentence of their babbling; but there was one word spoken so often that I heard it distinctly. It was the soft and expressive noun, "tufa." I had never heard it before, but its frequent repetition was puzzling, and I was convinced that the word had an important meaning.

Day was now growing, and people of the village would soon be astir; so the stranger motioned to the natives to be seated; and they gathered around him in silence as he addressed them briefly in a commanding way. Had they been hypnotized, they could not have fixed a more intent gaze upon their evident master. They hung upon his words as if his discourse were music.

At the end of his speech there was a suddenness of farewells. The people bowed with marked deference, again cried, "Tufa! tufa!" and dispersed.

The tattooed giant then bounded through the forest like a deer, leaving me gazing into the wood, bewildered. By the time I had mused until I was dizzy over the puzzle, my little native wife was astir, and the closing of shutters and doors to shut out the heat of day showed that the village was shaking sleep from its eyes.

"What does 'tufa' mean?" I asked Tuna, as soon as she was up.

"Tufa? tufa?" she said; "it means the great chief, but it is an old word which we don't use much. Where did you hear it?"

Her answer startled me like a call to arms, and it was some time before I told her of the ceremony in the wood. You never saw anybody so puzzled as I was, sitting there trying to spell out the meaning of that ominous morning picture. That my neighbors were greeting a tattooed white giant as their king, boded evil,—and the thought choked me. Tuna saw my confusion with alarm.

"What does it all mean?" I asked, after

I had told her the details of the strange gathering across the river.

She drew near and told a story that shed light on the situation, and set me planning. From her description, which teemed with references showing that she was not yet free from superstition, it was probable that the stranger was an ambitious beachcomber known as Bill Banks. He was resident on another island, of which he had become the virtual ruler, holding the real chief in fear by his feats of ventriloquism and sleight of hand. Tuna had heard of his exploits, and she knew it was his habit to make occasional visits to Atollia, and that he levied tribute whenever he saw anything he wanted.

"Why did n't you tell me about Banks before?" I asked.

She said she had not regarded the circumstance as important, and that she did not care to worry me over the whims of her people. I suspected that there was something of fear in her secrecy, as if she thought harm might come from meddling

with the affairs of a man reputed to be in league with invisible powers.

By close questioning I learned that this desperado was an ingenious scoundrel, a cut-throat, and a dare-devil of wide resources. By a story current for many years, he possessed hypnotic powers, and was accompanied by powerful devils, known as "makani," or wind-gods. They had thin, shrill voices, and were swift of foot, and the sound of their speaking would dart here and there with the fleetness of shadows. Such was Tuna's story.

"That 's because the scoundrel threw his voice from him and changed his tones," I said, explaining that I had such powers to a limited degree, and that in my country almost anybody could throw a piping voice a few feet from him. If you could have seen her wondering eyes when I did the "man-in-the-box" talk common among ventriloquists, you would understand the rich field that superstition has among the islanders. Despite my explanations and her belief in my frankness, the experi-

ments were so uncanny that she shuddered and was nervous.

Another feature of old Bill Banks's devil-work was the deft manipulation of coins so that they disappeared in thin air, while the natives looked on in open-mouthed wonder. Pretending to be a sorcerer, he readily convinced the savages that his invisible allies had carried away the disappearing articles.

"Tuna, did you never hear that the hand is sometimes quicker than the eye?" I asked.

"I don't think it is," she said, "or I never heard so."

I manipulated a few pocket-pieces, so as to keep her guessing like a child who sees for the first time clever palming and other tricks of the hand.

"You see I 've got as many spirits as Old Bill," I said,—"and I 've got none at all."

I could see that Banks was fading as a hero; but the story of his art of depriving people of articulate speech still lingered in Tuna's memory. From what I could gather,

the old beachcomber must have possessed rare hypnotic powers, which he used with all the boasting, hypocrisy, and wickedness of an evil mind.

It appeared that in one or two instances Banks had worked upon his subjects until they were frightened almost to death. By pretended prayers and incantations, and by food-offerings to invisible gods, he paved the way for his work.

Once he sought an intended victim and began a conversation with him, during which (the Atollians believed) the fingers of devils clutched the unfortunate man's vocal organs and paralyzed his speech. Banks pretended he could force his quarry to linger in speechless agony for years, or even to die, if it were so decreed.

It was believed that Banks enjoyed the friendship of poison-gods, and that he knew incantations that would turn harmless food into deadly drugs. He convinced the people that he was a diviner in whose vision the future was as clear as the white sands of the beach.

A little reflection made it plain that this malevolent and bold schemer was a dangerous enemy. He knew native character, and was master of many arts of trickery. Ages of superstition had made possible the success of such a scoundrel. By a command, he might call to his aid dangerous allies from our ranks. Troops of pliable natives, robbed of their reason by fear, and unrestrained by high morals, might serve the wicked white man at any moment. They framed the picture of latent dangers,—and I shuddered at the thought of our weakness.

I heard Tuna's story of the stranger's power with growing surprise, which I concealed with difficulty. Though I pooh-poohed these yarns of sorcery, I knew I could not explain them to the natives; and although I made light of Banks's alleged deeds of mystery, the whole situation lay heavy on my heart.

While I knew we could vanquish any foe that might meet us in open battle, I felt the weakness of modern warfare in a conflict

with superstition. Every savage brain was a battle-field, swarming with rebellious beliefs, all intrenched behind bulwarks of ignorance and fear.

It was plain that there was work to be done; we must dislodge this devil from his lair, at any cost. His presence on our island was like a plague, and his skulking and secrecy would render him hard game to bag. So long as he hovered near us, there could be no safety,—and we were feverish for the chase.

The last story of the cunning sorcerer's exploits proved a treasure that saved us at a time of peril. It concerned a quiver of poisoned arrows carried by Banks. The slightest scratch from one of his mysterious javelins was said to mean a death of agony.

Tuna knew of men and animals that had fallen victims of these secret missiles of destruction. One, a chief, had refused to allow Banks a third young wife, and in the combat that followed, the ruler apparently won. The white devil shook

hands with his opponent, agreeing to make no further trouble. But Banks was seen to smile like a gloating demon when he observed that one of his arrows had grazed the victim's naked thigh. Before sundown the chief died in frothing delirium, his body bloated beyond recognition, the flesh black, the face bearing a stare of agony.

In his cups that night (after a debauch in which he consumed large quantities of a native liquor), Banks boasted that he possessed a bottle of poison that he had extracted from venomous snakes which he had charmed in America. As reptiles and poisonous insects were unknown on the island, the story, and its corroboration in the frightful death of a popular chieftain, terrified the natives, and raised Banks to the standing of a demi-god.

CHAPTER XII.

THE POISONED ARROW.

THERE was little peace in my heart until I sought Swanson and told him of the tattooed stranger and his pretense of an alliance with the gods.

I reached the President's house just after he had finished his labors the next afternoon. The sun was bright, the sea air glorious; so we walked and talked for hours, as was our custom when grave matters were under discussion.

It was with regret that I disturbed the old man's sweet, calm hour with a story that meant the beginning of worry; but duty bade me conceal no detail of what I had seen; so I gave the rugged leader the narrative, Tuna's yarn and all.

"We can handle the spears and clubs

and slings of wild tribes better than the cunning of one devil-worker," he said; "for the dealer in black art can draw on darkness and the forest for mystery, and on the natives for men to wield knives."

Though surprised that Banks had followers among our people, Swanson was not a stranger to such adventurers' methods and ambitions.

"He's one of those desperate wanderers who carry disease and devilment throughout the islands," he said; "and I'd almost wager the *Rosalie* that he's the same dog that had some English traders put to death as witches in Atuona ten years ago; and he's as evil a spirit as ever led white men to destruction or plundered natives of their copra and pearls."

"Do you look for any grave danger from him?" I asked.

"It might have been serious," he returned, "and it's all a guess now, for a whole tribe might be honey-combed with rebellion before you'd know it; so, you see, you've made a lucky discovery. If

their heads get turned, they 're cunninger 'n rats. They might cut your throat most any day, and believe they were killin' a witch. It all depends upon the power that 's controllin' them."

Swanson explained that a man like Banks might do more harm than a thousand armed cannibals, because the wisest rulers and greatest generals are powerless to prevent assassination in their own tents.

"Why, Hadley," he said, "I tell you that superstition grows here like weeds in a garden. I believe it 's older than war and cannibalism, and that 's sayin' a good deal. I think the priests and dealers in hobgoblins were here before the warriors got here with their spears and clubs."

My recent discoveries showed that Swanson did not overestimate the hold of superstition. The power of dealers in the occult was evidently beyond calculation. A belief in supernatural agents—ghosts, gods, devils—made the savages constant victims of fear, as their forefathers had been for untold ages; and I had no doubt that

native sorcerers and men like Banks were viewed as creatures of peculiar sanctity, as if the gods favored and supported them by day and guided them by night.

"This is the hardest nut we 've had to crack yet," said Swanson; "and I must give you my plans, because I know you 're true-blue. Are you ready to join me in a pledge of secrecy, and to help to quell this rising rebellion by measures that would turn some people's heads?"

"Captain," I replied, "I 'm not the man to wilt in the presence of trials. I 've been happy ever since the day when I first stepped aboard the *Rosalie*, and I 'll not desert the man who showed me the waters of a new life. I believe you know these people, and your plans and ideas command my respect. As I have confidence in you, I 'll be loyal to the end."

"Give me your hand!" he said, "and you 'll see an outlaw outdone. If we don't beat him at his own game, this same Banks will have himself declared king, and our lives won't be worth a puff of smoke."

I was with him, heart and hand; but I expressed some fear of results, knowing that we had to deal with trickery among people as cunning as Indians.

"There 's no trouble about it," he returned; "but you 've got to fight fire with fire, and we must out-Banks Banks. You can rule white men by force, or by appealing to their love of money or power; but you can't rule a native who believes in another man's ghosts, unless you introduce bigger ghosts."

"Then it 's a case of rivalry among mediums, and we 've got to go into the spook business ourselves,—is that it?" I asked.

"Well, it 's something like that," said Swanson. "Now, you see, we 've been doin' famously here among ourselves, and we thought we were all right among the Atollians. That shows what little trust there is to be put in them. By an accident you 've made a discovery of a desperado in the bush; and it looks as if he 'd be potted and we 'd be saved,—but things might have run along as smooth as oil

with him, until half the white men woke up some morning with their throats cut. That 's the treachery of superstition. You must never forget that these devils have been eatin' one another, and the women too, for ages,—with all respect for your good wife."

"Oh, damn relations!" I exclaimed; "it 's a question of saving throats."

"Then I 'll say this," said the old sea-dog; "that all the beachcombers in the world can't beat Swanson at the magician business, and when the old man turns loose he 'll drive terror to the hearts of the wisest chiefs, and make them fear him as the master of spirits."

"The chiefs?" I asked; "do you think our chiefs recognize Banks?"

"They 're the biggest cowards of all," said he; "for they 've ordered so many people put to death, that they 're afraid of dead men's bones whenever they hear the sudden rustle of a leaf. Yes, sir; if we ever come to grief, it 'll be through the treachery of the leaders."

We discussed the situation until the high, clear moon denoted that midnight was near. We walked along the beach, where the clamor of the surf drowned our voices in the eloquent tumult of waves; and at the end of our deliberations we had decided on a plan that would strike a fatal blow to Banks and his followers. In spite of our democratic ideas and love of fair play, we spelt the word "K-I-N-G," and the path to victory led to a crown.

The surroundings were unique and the demand for action was imperative. The natives had been ruled by one man since the childhood of savagery; and the arbitrary powers of a sovereign seemed the only remedy that would save the little republic of Atollia from destruction by hordes of misguided cannibals. The white man's duty was plain:—he must seize the reins, or be destroyed by the wheels of Juggernaut.

I agreed that the only course was a firm, unlimited power over natives, exercised by the same ruler that was the chief executive

of the white men's government; and I observed that the suggested solution delighted the man selected by fate for our leader. His hopes leapt high, and his conversation, by degrees, revealed the ambition that lay close to his heart. I could now see his plans as under a magnifying-glass:—if he could appeal to mystery and fear, the spirit of revolution would be paralyzed, every stagger at reasoning buried. The natives would even worship him as a god.

"I 'd rather throw myself into the sea," he said, "than bring a colony out here to have them murdered by a cut-throat like Banks. I 've been more 'n half-fool to be asleep so long, anyhow; for I knew these barbarians would break loose some day in some kind of deviltry. But it would be a disgrace to the age and country for a scoundrel who has led the life of a vagabond on the reefs to become a king and ruler over our carcasses."

The thought that Banks or one of his kind might ever mount the steps of a throne worked the old man into a fine frenzy; and

he spoke freely of his plans, which I heartily seconded, agreeing to help him carry them to fruition at any cost.

"There must be a rigid hand at the helm that controls the native ship of state," he said, as he revolved the problem in his mind.

"Yes; rigid, very rigid," I replied.

"No loose brotherhood-of-man idea among the copper-colored ones," he returned, scanning my countenance.

"You 're right," I replied; "they must be held by the grip of a vise."

"Agreed," was his expressive answer.

One purpose now fired his brain and drove him with the unwearying strength of a steam-engine,—the desire to rule, as he had ruled white and black on the sea. The possibility that the government might fail for lack of firm, level-headed leadership, or because the natives were secretly led into revolt by a wandering trickster, nerved him to heroic efforts. I believe he would have felt the disgrace, rather than the pain and horror of dying, had his last breath been

gasped amid the leaderless bickerings of his fellow-men or in the fury of savage revolution. The driving spirit of the sea captain now dominated his thoughts and nerved every fiber to the pitch of supreme exertion. He worked fast, like a general planning in the thick of battle,—and it was surprising how well he laid his wires.

It was far past midnight when we ended our council, with an engagement to meet for further planning early the next day. The moon rode far in the west when I entered my house, and I lay for an hour within sight of the snowy surf before sleep silenced its music and ended my puzzling over the making of a king.

I was on nettles until we met the next day; for my mind was filled with the fear of invisible dangers. Had I been on a dismasted ship in mid-ocean, the nervousness would not have been so great; for "there is, at least, deliberation in the contemplation of death's silent approach" as one scans the horizon, hoping for a sail. But the fear of an assassin's blow is enough to unnerve a gladiator.

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Swanson was at the place of meeting on time, and we breathed the morning air with high spirits and eager hearts. So full were we of the business of the hour, that the people we passed seemed more like machines than men. Thus, bubbling with our private ambitions, we hurried to our place of conference, like men dreaming.

The details of Swanson's scheme of king-making were outlined with such minuteness that his foresight and ingenuity were charming. An unexpected confession awaited me, however; for when the Captain explained his plans, it was plain that he had made provision for an elaborate scheme of devil-work before the *Rosalie* sailed from San Francisco. The equipments for a lark that would terrify a whole island-ful of cannibals were carefully stored in our ship's hold, even before bacon and beans were in place.

"The warehouse now holds my secrets," he said, "and there are things hid over there that are more useful than the British navy. Trifles as light as butterflies or dry

leaves have been known to stampede a large tribe."

This statement seemed probable, in the light of what I had already seen of native character,—but the history of Salem witchcraft shows that similar conditions once existed among our own people.

We decided upon a place for the coronation,—a deep, black wood overhung by cliffs, off a bellowing coast of sea-caves. I never have seen a spot of greater loneliness, nor one more suggestive of mystery. No wonder the native imagination peopled its sunless depths and caverns with ghosts and devils; for in spite of the yellow sands of the beach and the wondrous colors of the flowers, there was something terrifying in the stillness that reigned in that virgin wilderness. Its climbing forests and rugged cañons always were supposed to be the abiding-place of devils; and none but sorcerers and those under a spell of enchantment were thought to have the power to enter that forbidding territory without certain destruction.

Such was the spot we agreed upon for our theater of diabolism; and there was little doubt that scant paraphernalia would be needed to bend the natives to our will. Our boldness in entering there as masters would be half the battle. A wild night of rugged clouds flying past the moon, the glare of our fires, with darkness and solitude for accessories, would go far toward doing the work,—but our path lay along a course of greater boldness, every detail of our plans potent with elements of victory, and we completed our schemes in a mood the most hopeful imaginable.

At the end of our planning, we found that we had wandered a good distance from headquarters, so we made a brisk start for home, skirting a wood that ran almost to the edge of the village. Along our course the ground was covered here and there with boulders and jagged bits of lava, and a little distance from the open spaces there was a thickness of underwood. Just within the forest, overhanging boughs shut out the brightness of day, giving a tempered

light like the gloaming. The trees that fringed the sea bore wild fruits and coffee-berries, and the ripe things among the leaves glistened like tinsel, the yellow background of limes looming rich above the white line of surf. Some distance in, where the shadows closed up like the coming of night, was the babbling of a brook, sometimes the cry of a bird. The place was so uncanny that natives never ventured beyond the clearing. Though the noise of breaking seas ever fell on the ear, there were often sounds that set one trembling,—and any sudden scurry was enough to make the bravest man reach for his weapon.

As we passed through this place of gloom there was suddenly a noise within the thicket, and beyond us—too far to be caused by our approach—the air glistened with bright butterflies, which flitted away as if disturbed. Almost before we could dart our eyes to the place of the sound, a savage face peered through the thicket, and there was a hum of talking in an unfamiliar tongue. We seized our

revolvers, for the shock set our nerves quivering.

We hurried past, eager to leave that dark place of ambush behind, feeling that we were watched and followed. Our gait was a sidelong stepping, so that we might cover the wood with our eyes as we walked away. Underfoot, the sand was so soft that our steps were muffled, almost noiseless. Within the wood there was an occasional sound of a cracking limb, as when a man steps on fallen branches; but for the most part there was silence. If we were followed after the first few minutes, the soft tread of our pursuers was lost in the damp leaves; but we felt that human eyes were upon us.

We breathed more freely as we drew near an open space that lay between the village and the place of mystery; but we still clutched our defenders, as if the ground might open and reveal our enemies.

"What foolish dare-devils we 've been to venture into such a place," I said, breaking

a silence that had paralyzed speech since the sight of the face.

"Clumsy bunglers!" said Swanson, still high-strung and solemn.

We had not gone ten feet farther when I felt the wind of an arrow that flew past my cheek. I wheeled, and fired into the wood, seeing nothing. There was no sound but the report of my weapon.

Swanson stood pale and firm, his eye kindled as at sight of a foe. With a dash, he fired twice in quick succession, like a man with a moving target before him. A human groan followed, then a cracking of dry limbs, as if men were stampeding through the thicket.

"I guess I've bagged something, or given 'em a lead pill to worry with," said my companion.

Then a whirring sound fell upon us as two arrows whizzed past our heads. We retreated fast, firing as we ran beyond the range of our enemies. A few more arrows came, quite spent before they reached us.

Of a suddenness that was surprising, an arrow, more viciously aimed than the others, grazed Swanson's left arm, and fell harmless, not far away.

"Nearly got me that time," he remarked as he fired into the forest.

By this time we were nearing the village, and people were hurrying toward the sound of our firing, for never before had such a fray startled the community. Our enemies doubtless saw the crowd coming, and dared not venture out of the thicket.

Suddenly my eye fell upon a red spot on the snowy ducking of the Captain's left coat sleeve, which was slit as if by a stab.

"Don't you know you 've been hit?" I exclaimed, pointing to the blood as we ran away.

He looked, and was surprised that there was no pain, not even numbness. When we were beyond the range of foes I stripped off his coat; and when the left arm was bared, a small wound, like the shallow stab

of a knife, was seen to be the extent of his injuries.

"It stings, now that the air strikes it," he said,—"a sort of burning, as if I 'd been touched by a red-hot iron."

"That 's probably the poison," I returned; "and if you can get at the wound with your mouth, you 'd better suck it with all the force you 've got."

He did as I bade, and before he had finished that simple surgery he was pale at the thought of death. A weakness seized him when he saw the image of defeat flit by for a passing moment. Since the cut was superficial, every chance was in his favor.

"If I die of this scratch," he said, "I want you to hound Banks and his crowd to earth, and hang every devil of them from the yard-arm of the *Rosalie*."

He stood dazed, like a man who feels opportunity slipping through his fingers; but his senses soon awoke, and the scurrying vision of defeat faded. His resolute, pugnacious nature was roused for battle, and his wrath flamed fierce and eager,

spurred to its utmost by the pricking of that little arrow.

He was nerved for the fight of his life, and from that moment there was no lagging in his plans for the punishing of our enemies.

"Damn these savages!" he exclaimed, "I'll put my heel on their black necks and teach them who's who in this country."

Now I saw plainly that he was determined to be king and ruler over all, and his purpose was urged by the resolution and grit of a powerful nature; it was sustained by an abiding faith in himself and in victory.

By this time we were surrounded by natives and colonists; their steps had been hurrying in our direction ever since the sound of firing. Doctor Saville was one of the first on the ground, and his medicine-case had not been overlooked.

I called him aside and explained about the snake-poison, as Tuna had told in her story of the young chief's death. The

Doctor applied soda to the wound, and gave a pill of strychnine to keep up the action of the heart; then we hurried to our homes.

Beyond a slight swelling and a few shooting pains, the poison did no harm, and while the Captain lay quiet for several days we completed plans that we hoped would result in victory.

CHAPTER XIII.

A CAVE IN THE WILDERNESS.

OUR thoughts turned at once to the serious problem before us, and we prepared for adventurous work in the darksome wood that surrounded the southern part of our settlement.

We had far less to fear from Banks and his immediate company than from his followers in our own ranks, and the difficulties of the situation required delicacy and strategy at every step. Hard as were the conditions, we had powerful allies,—not our modern weapons and superior skill, but nature's forces, and the superstition of our enemies.

Our refuge was the wood; its gray trunks and mossy boughs, its dim vaults and moaning winds, were more potent than violence;

for with right handling they would help to disarm the natives and bring them helpless at our feet. We saw the way plainly, mapped our course boldly, and turned to the inmost darkness of the high trees as hopefully as a general turns to his trained soldiers in the hour of battle.

Our first work was tedious, difficult for every step of the way, and never free from danger. It involved the exploring of a section of dense forest (in which our enemies might lie concealed and pick us off), and the clearing of a path to the spot chosen for final ceremonies with the chiefs.

We could not begin our tour, however, without the knowledge of our own people and the aid of a band of muscular workmen. It was necessary to let a few leading spirits into our secret, lest our actions should cause misgivings among the colonists; so we invited Doctor Saville, O'Fallon, Randolph, Judge Davis, the school teachers, and half a dozen representative men to a conference. We told the story of Banks and his machinations, and Swanson explained

what he could do, if allowed freedom in his work.

"I can beat this devil in my own way," he said, when the facts were before the committee; "but there must be no strings on me. I want authority to use force, if it 's needed; and you 've got to understand that the natives 'll regard me as their king when I 'm done,—and if they think I 'm a god, it 'll be no man's call to tell them different."

"It strikes me that there 's nobody here who wants to limit you in any way," said Judge Davis; "for the dangers surrounding us are grave. You know native character, and you have our interests at heart,—so there should be no interference whatever."

The Judge's ideas prevailed, and the President's plans were sanctioned without question. He was granted authority to act as he deemed best.

We withheld the details of our scheme for reasons that seemed prudent, and it was given out that we should make a tour of the bush to determine its extent to the south.

Within a week we were equipped for the

preliminary survey. Our party consisted of a score of sturdy men with axes and pruning-knives, spades, and sharp hatchets; for there was a thicket to clear before we could proceed far into the grove. Our final salvation was the happy chance that we struck the dry bed of a stream, where the interlacing vines were young, the boughs being readily severable by the blow of a hatchet.

The hour of our start was early one purple morning that gave promise of a perfect day. We were followed to the edge of the forest by a crowd of mystified natives, and some of their leaders urged us to forego risking our lives among the dangerous ghosts of the place we were entering. But we defied their demons, and the simple Atollians fled in terror the moment we boldly entered the forbidden grounds that had been long tabooed by their wise men and sorcerers.

Going into that dark and lonely jungle was (to them) like entering the empire of the dead. They knew they might tramp for days without coming in sight or sound

of man, and the legends of their tribes portrayed the fury of demons that dwelt in the silence and gloom of that retreat.

Swanson's face kindled when he saw the Atollians draw back affrighted, for the summer of his hopes lay in their fear. If he could impress them with the terrors of our march, and the certainty that we should return from the home of devils unharmed, he would be worshiped as a deity; indeed, he was already a half-god for his boldness. So, at the proper moment, he uttered an Atollian curse that sent fear shivering down the spines of every native in the village.

"I 'm a bigger devil than all the devils," he cried; "for great devils are my slaves, and I challenge the skulls of dead men, and all the ghosts of hell, to meet me in battle!"

With that defiant cry, he flourished his revolver and fired six resounding shots plump into the trees. Following this wild orgy, every man in the party brandished his weapon, and several fired their rifles

and revolvers. The natives scampered back to their homes like a flock of frightened geese, and we began our work amid laughter and high hopes.

"They 'll talk things over with the chiefs and sorcerers," said the Captain, "and when we come back we 'll be taken for a band of devil-drivers and rulers of the dark."

Our progress for two hours was painfully slow and discouraging. Foliage grew so luxuriantly that our work through thick clusters was like mowing brush that grows as close as grass, and finally, when we reached a sort of opening, we had to pick our way along the edge of a banana-swamp. Fearing that we might lose our course in a night trip, we drove stakes and ran a line of twine on the swamp side, to mark our path from the chief places of danger. One spot was so marshy under a treacherous carpet of weeds and leaves that we covered it with brush and piled blocks of lava on the young limbs.

Just beyond this rude bridge a huge

banyan sent forth a network of trailing roots, which ran like a tangle of bearded fibers toward the rich, leaf-strewn earth. After two hours of hard cutting and digging, we came to another open space, steep and rocky, with a burst of sun and a sound of running water not far away. From here our way rose and fell until we were beside a purling brook that ran over "stones as red as rubies." The place had an air of peace, and we rested by the brook for a bit of needed lunch. A chink of sunlight peeped through the foliage, and the singing of a bird echoed as we ate.

It was a gloomy place for resting, even for white men. Talk as you may about superstition being silliness, there is something in the speechless void of a tropical forest that alarms one, more than the thought of tigers in a jungle. We fared well enough while we toiled, but discourse withered and cheerfulness departed when we stopped laboring and began eating in that tomb of a spot. The place seemed hemmed in, the silence became oppressive, and

isolation and loneliness pervaded our spirits like things of evil. A man given to emotions might have succumbed to a sense of fear, for the very spot where we spread our food was a vault of high trees, the silence broken by nothing save the occasional notes of birds, the falling of a dead limb, or the music of distant waterfalls.

"No wonder the poor devils are afraid of it in the night," said Swanson, when he got my ear; "for the place gives a white man the shivers at high noon."

A suggestion of eternal dimness haunted the prospect on every hand; the solitude grew heavier each moment; and the soughing of a sudden breeze overhead made us eager to burrow our way beyond the oppressive silence.

We did not stay there long, but drove on with our work while light lasted. The afternoon waned fast in that neck of gloom, and before our watches had marked four o'clock, the close of day seemed at hand. When you remember that we were not in a northern latitude of short days,

but close to the equatorial belt (where night and day are quite evenly divided throughout the year), you will understand how deeply we were buried from the outer world in that tomb of sky-reaching trees.

It was so dark that there was nothing to do but give up our path-making and go back to the village; so each man shouldered his tools and weapons, and we marched over our new road with becoming pride.

After twisting and climbing for somewhat less than half a mile, we found ourselves in the full light of day again, proud that the descending sun might mark a good day's work to our credit. It was a great pleasure —the delight of explorers in virgin forests —to note the difference between our triumphal journey out of the woods and the painful struggles by which we had fought our way beyond the glare of day. Besides, we should be heroes in the eyes of the chiefs and their fellows, who would view us as conquerors.

"Another good day's work will land us among the big boulders of the hilltop,"

I suggested, "or so far within the forest that the natives will think they are in another world, if ever we get them to follow us there."

"Don't overlook the fact that we 'll get them in there before the job's done," said Swanson; "and I 'm in for stoppin' just as soon as we reach a proper spot of mystery."

We reached the village before evening lamps were lighted, and the natives gathered around us like children at a circus, only some of them were afraid we had brought devils with us; so they kept their distance. We decided to say little about our explorations.

"We 've killed many devils," said Swanson, "but there are many more to destroy, and we 'll fight them again to-morrow."

The pink clouds of evening now filled the sky, the crowning glory of a heavenly day; the birds no longer sang from the boughs of high trees, and our weary woodmen, as well as the children of superstition, were soon asleep.

The guards at our fort were doubly vigilant that night, the village was patrolled, and every native leader was under the eye of a white man until day bloomed rosy from the sea again.

There was the very deuce to pay when I got home. Tuna had been weeping, and half a dozen native women fled at my approach. Terror dwelt beneath my roof, and the worst old wives' tales imaginable had been running among the natives.

My wife was afraid I had been harmed by some invisible force, or lured away by female sirens. Her fears had been inflamed by her visitors, some of them old wenches who pretended to have known of many cases of men enticed to their ruin by spirits of the wood. All this made it a hard job for me to straighten out my domestic fences. Despite all I could say, Tuna implored me to go from her no more; and it was some hours before I could quiet her.

My situation was peculiar, for my tongue was tied. I dared not deny that devils dwelt where we had been, and that our business

was with them. Even had I desired to ease matters with Tuna, Swanson's oath and our firing into the bush would have confronted me like a stone wall; besides, our whole case lay in the vanquishing of devils; our trump card was the pretense of witchcraft and diabolism. The most I could do was to assure my wife and her friends that we could either put devils to flight or summon them to our aid; and I convinced her, after much talking, that no white man ever had been devoured by Atollian devils, and she was quite composed by morning.

Our second and third days in the forest brought us to our destination, say nearly two miles from where we entered. We had slashed thousands of heavy vines and felled many young trees to reach the place of rest; and our entire course was a fight with creeping plants and tangles of foliage.

Sometimes our path lay around fallen trees or piles of boulders and lava, leading at last to a wild spot of caves, not far from the sea. We could not have gone farther,

on account of ragged cliffs, which frowned in the background; beyond them a black mountain hovered ominous and solemn.

It was our good fortune that there was little underwood at the place chosen for our temple of mysteries. The spot in front of the cave looked like a clearing, though surely it was a stranger to the axes (even to the footsteps) of men; but there was not the same gloomy thicket of boughs overhead that there had been elsewhere, and the sun filtered through, more than anywhere else in that region of darkness.

At the end of the fourth day, we looked upon our work with a thrill of satisfaction, and then returned home over a path wide enough for a horse. Half a dozen rough places needed leveling, there were stumps to be uprooted, a swamp had to be bridged, and here and there footholds were yet to be dug in steep banks.

We hurried from the twilight of the wood, the spirit of conquerors mounting in our breasts. At last, a few mossy trunks marked the place of exit into the glare of

day; the breath of the forest no longer scented the air, and we were within sight of home and in hearing of the sounding sea again.

Within another week we had explored the loneliest cave I ever have seen, built a path to its farther walls, and dedicated its echoing depths to the purposes of white men.

The light of the brightest day was lost in the depths of this gloomy cavern, and the music of unseen cascades sounded faint in its deep recesses. There were places where the voice played weird pranks as it bounded in echoes against the high domes; and the strongest hearts were thrilled with awe when the glimmer of a light revealed massive stalactites and broken pinnacles of nature's masonry in the yawning background.

For several days the sound of our digging and the blows of our hammering filled that great cavern with the mystery of magnified sounds and echoes. The mouth of the place growled and bellowed

when we worked, and gave forth a Babel of voices (as of giants) when we talked or laughed. A cave of devils could not have sounded more riotous than our innocent speech, distorted by many reverberations.

At the end of our labors, an expert and courageous investigator might have found a few batteries and wires carefully entombed in the foundations of the cave, all neatly covered by the masonry and engineering of man. A more extended inspection would have shown that our wires ran to shelves in various stone walls, wherein some of the most delicate and marvelous machines ever invented were skillfully adjusted and concealed for the service of our people.

Every person in the company was pledged anew to secrecy, whereupon the cavern was left in readiness for our return. Randolph and an electrician drew a rough plan of the interior, after which we went forth into the open, feeling that the cave was ready for the work whenever we should call upon it for assistance. The pressing of

a button would set its lights flashing and its sounds echoing; the rest remained to us. If we did n't give Taipu and his chiefs taste enough of devils for the rest of their lives, it would be no fault of careful planning.

In the presence of our devils, Banks and his tricks of voice and hand would appear puny and harmless; and before we left that place, the vision of success rose before our eyes like a living presence, and we could see the ignoble ending of Banks's career,— his devils defied by the chiefs they had frightened, himself hounded by those he had deceived.

CHAPTER XIV.

VOICES OF THE DEAD.

A LONG talk with Tuna in the quiet of home convinced me that the natives were under Banks's control to a dangerous degree, swallowing his wildest stories and shivering in childish fear.

There was new occasion for alarm in the probability that he had started some of them in evil paths during our absence in the wood,— at least, there were evidences that his hold had grown stronger.

Though my faithful wife now believed in the power of our determined band (in spite of her lingering fear of Banks), it was clear that she stood almost alone in her confidence; our secret enemy was undoubtedly the idol of the masses. Tuna told me she believed her grandfather was

afraid to forbid his people from going to meet the tattooed outlaw, and she feared that her countrymen might be led into wrong under Banks's leadership.

By drawing her into conversation more deeply, I learned that even Taipu lived in the shadow of fear. Tuna had overheard him say it was strange that our men were not on good terms with the ghosts of the dead, nor with such invisible forces as the boasting reef-rover commanded without difficulty.

"What can Banks do with his devils?" I asked.

"My grandfather says he can stop the drouth from killing banana and bread-fruit trees," she replied.

This was queer doctrine to be thrown in my teeth, and my blood boiled at the thought that the ungrateful old savage had been waxing prosperous on our rich stores for years, while the impostor who pretended to control the seasons had never caused a blade of grass to grow nor a single industry to thrive. His career on

the beach had been one of sensual idleness and unpunished crime. Not content with his undisputed sway over the tribes that followed him, I mused, he now sought to do mischief among our people; indeed, there was no doubt that he was working fast to achieve his purpose. In this mood, I longed to deal him a fatal blow.

I lost no time in laying the case before Swanson and the others. After a brief discussion, we decided to hold a council with the chiefs at once, and to lay claim to such powers as no man ever had pretended to possess.

"We 'll keep 'em guessin' from the jump," said the Captain; "for what your wife 's told you will look mightily like mind-readin', especially since she overheard a good deal of it unknown to Taipu."

The next day we got the chiefs together and began our business with a firm hand. Seven were there; five tall, powerful fellows, Taipu, and one other rather withered with age. When they were seated on mats, which were thrown in a circle

on the floor of a chief's feast-house, our people—ten or twelve leading men—surrounded them, and Swanson stood in the center of the ring of chiefs and addressed them with commanding boldness. He spoke their language with uncommon fluency, passion was in his face, and his direct gestures were like the driving of nails.

When he began his address the natives riveted their eyes upon him, as if to challenge his statements (for he stood discounted in their sight); but in less than five minutes the old diplomat had looked them down. They hung their heads and quailed under his accusations.

"Though we have treated you like brothers," he said, "you 've skulked in the woods and plotted with Bill Banks, the enemy of Atollia and of all good men. Like fools and children, you have believed in his powers. I don't think he has any devils, or they are very weak, if they are devils at all. Now, do you know what you have done by listening to this bad white man's talk? You have made our devils mad, and a few days

ago they wanted to destroy Taipu and all his chiefs. Did n't you see us shoot at these same devils and drive them to the deep wood? Did n't you see us cut and dig our way to their home? and are we not here, sound and well? You should hang your heads in shame because of your ingratitude to us, who saved your lives."

The speech was having a telling effect; those big, muscular chiefs had troubled faces, and some trembled with fear when Swanson laid it on strong. He went on harder than ever:—

"But we have stopped our ghosts from harming you. What 's the use of having evil spirits, unless you can make them work for you? We have made them go to the stars and get your grandfathers' ghosts,— the ghosts of the great dead men who ruled Atollia when all men were giants. We never have lied to you, never have deceived you in any way; and we tell you now that many devils are our slaves this moment, and they will do our bidding. The spirits of your illustrious ancestors want to speak

with you in the wood. They love you, and will do you no injury; they want to guide you in paths of peace and warn you against your enemies. We will go with you and carry our weapons and charms against evil. You will not be harmed; for wisdom is at the end of your journey, and good spirits await you at the appointed place. We have promised to bring you to your ancestors, and nothing will do you any harm. Our word is out, and we have pledged them that you will meet them where the wood is high, and where the voices of the silent ones are awakened into speech."

There was a lively consultation and shaking of heads at the conclusion of the speech; and by their muttering, the decision seemed to hang in the balance.

"If you refuse to do what we have promised," resumed Swanson, "we cannot guarantee peace or good luck to any of you; but if you act like brave men and brothers, you will go where we have been,—you will let us take you by the hands and lead you to places of safety. In the quiet of the

wood you will hear wisdom, and make your peace with the ancient rulers of this island, who are now displeased that you are friendly with our enemies."

The President drove his speech at them hard, never yielding an inch from the stand taken at the start.

"We will give up Banks and do whatever you want," said one of the chiefs; "but we fear that your devils would be so strong that they would capture us from you. We have known of devils who lied to their best friends, and some of our people have suffered because devils were too strong."

"Your only safety lies in doing what I have told you," returned Swanson; "for these are your ancestors; they are not liars. The invisible powers hate cowards; and if you depart from our advice, as they have directed it, we cannot help you any more; every Atollian will then have to make his own settlement with the ghosts of those he and his ancestors have eaten."

They halted over the proposition a long time, and finally decided to go with us to

the forest. It was a bitter dose for them to swallow, but fear had them so hard that they turned to us as the safest refuge. Swanson's pleading reassured them, and they consented like children who first rebel, then follow their father into dark places.

We brooked no delay, and the next morning the Atollians prepared themselves for the journey. Their ceremonies of departure were weird beyond anything I ever had seen,—as solemn as a funeral in the South Seas. They bade their terrified and weeping relatives elaborate farewells, as if they believed the trip would be the last on earth.

Half a dozen sorcerers—some of them very old women—crooned their witch-songs while the chiefs were blacking their faces as if for battle. Just before the start (which was not until night) the Atollians girded their loins and bared their tattooed hips, thus completing the most solemn appeal for protection known in all the ceremonials of the people. The ghosts of their departed relatives were supposed to notice that such conduct was the offering of contrite hearts.

It required great self-command for us to keep our faces straight, but our whole case lay in carrying out the play; so we allowed ourselves to feel the thrill of new emotions as we marched with that sober company of frightened rulers to the place chosen for our final parley. Two of their leaders carried brands and oil, others spears and war-clubs; all were fully armed with knives.

Evening came with a thrilling afterglow over the high woods, a dreamy moon in crescent hanging over the sea; but there was trouble in the air before night had waned far, and the surf beat higher as the hours wore on. We soon reached the beginning of our path, and a little marching brought us into the unbroken silence of the forest.

We went into the wood quietly, without any flurry or loud talk, Swanson conversing with the chiefs in soothing tones of reassurance. But every native's face was solemn; in spite of their confidence in us, the business was not to their liking, and the slightest

mishap would have stampeded them like a band of sheep. Even with the fairest winds of opportunity, the problem was delicate; with any unusual sight or sound at the outset, nothing could have held the chiefs together or led them to the cave.

Our task was much like trying to quiet nervous horses; for it was a high-strung band we had in tow for a ramble through places of dread and darkness. A strange bird-call or the falling of a tree would have put them to flight, so superstitious were they in their dread of the bush.

Above us the boughs of great trees stood black and ominous against the sky, but at open places a halo of stars cheered the way. Here and there we stooped to pass under fallen trees, beneath which lay our road to the place of mystery.

There were several steep and rocky banks to climb, and at such points the footing was not very secure. A delightful sound along the path was the music of a waterfall leaping and thundering in the distance, the tones fading and growing with the

rhythm of the night breeze. All was darkness, save the shine of our lanterns and brands. Light from these made a bright path through the void of darkness; and we moved to the end of our journey without a single accident to mar our plans.

At last we halted before the cavern, and our programme began without delay. Randolph and an electrician entered with their lights, and took their posts within reach of a series of electric buttons that had been provided for starting necessary machinery at the right moment.

By a happy foresight the buttons were some distance from the shelves provided for the utterance of the sounds that were to terrify the chiefs. Beyond the light-bearers a venerable cliff of stalactite towered above our vision, gray and formidable in the flickering glare of the brands. The surroundings were grim; our breathing echoed like sounds in a cistern,—but the space beyond was as silent as Sahara.

"Chiefs and brothers," said Swanson, at the moment when it seemed proper

to break the silence, "we have promised you that no harm shall come to you or your people from this tour into the blackness of night. We have brought you to the place chosen by your ancestors. In a few moments they will speak from the cavern. It will be your duty to bow your heads and listen. You are forbidden to ask questions, and are commanded to obey the voices of the dead."

Randolph then adjusted one of the machines by turning a screw so as to adapt the sound to the distance of the hearers. The parts of this delicate instrument were so combined that the receiver (into which the sounds were first spoken) would transform an ordinary sibilant, or hissing sound, into a full tone of great depth and beauty. A condenser changed the low tones (originally uttered into the machine) into a mellow orotund, which was reproduced with vigor and deliberation by the sensitive diaphragm of the vibrator.

The button was touched, whereupon a faint electric light shone from the wall

of the cavern, at some distance from the chiefs.

"Taipu," Swanson began, "turn your eyes toward that light! It is dim and far away, and it gives forth very little more brightness than a glow-worm; but its twinkling marks the place where your ancestors will speak first. Do not be alarmed at anything you see or hear, but heed the advice of the departed."

The chiefs peered into the darkness, fixing their vision upon the glimmer of that dim light, their ears cocked for the promised speech.

"My beloved children of Atollia," said the marvelous little machine, from its tomb under the sprinkle of light, "listen to the words of wisdom here to-night; for Taipu the First will speak, Aimu and Opu will speak, and all of us will direct you how to live in peace and happiness with these white men, your benefactors."

The savages stood mute and cold, overcome like men face to face with the resurrected dead. The first brief speech sounded

as if from afar; but in that crypt of silence and darkness the echoing tones seemed to fill the world with their uncanny messages from the grave.

Dumbfounded in that place of gloom and terror, the natives' hearts were chilled to hear voices rising as if from the bowels of the earth.

"Bones of my ancestors!" exclaimed Swanson; "this is enough to set their heads spinning crazy."

If a funeral pyre had turned orator, or a bird had twittered Atollian, the astonishment of those addressed could not have been greater. But when the ingenious cylinder began to chant a weird death-song, you should have seen the chiefs gaze with glassy eyes and quivering lips, trembling like frightened dogs.

Taipu's emotions finally set him whining, and Swanson had a time quieting him down. "*Iki manu! Iki manu!*"[1] cried Taipu, in a thick, guttural speech, convulsed with fear. Even under the rays of burning

[1] God save us! God save us!

brands of cocoanut-oil, his lips looked drawn and blue, his features set in the violent agony of fear.

The light over the chanting cylinder faded gradually, only to be followed by another, then another, until half a dozen had bloomed and faded in various parts of the cavern. Every light was the signal for a speech addressed to the chiefs. Many of these talks were of a general character, such as the recitation of traditions and religious precepts; but at the proper moment the Banks question was disposed of in a way that sent gratification to our souls.

"You have been following Bill Banks and his false devils," said a particularly impressive voice, "and the hour has now come for you to promise the shadows of men that you will renounce Banks forever. Taipu, you and your followers must give answer whether you will abandon this false chief! We await your sacred promise that you will be men!

There was a delay. The mysterious voice

under the light ceased; the light itself went out, and the chiefs stood trembling.

"Do you intend to answer us, and avoid the day of wrath?" sounded a deep voice from the black depths of the cavern.

"O solemn spirits, we will obey you," cried Taipu.

"Spare us from harm, and we will be faithful," chimed the others.

"Then fall on your knees!" sounded the phonograph, under Randolph's deft manipulation.

The coppered-colored ones dropped to their knees in the most abject manner, wringing their hands and wailing.

"Do you promise the ghosts of the silent ones," said the marvelous cylinder, "that you will shun Banks, the evil one? Will you capture him and put him to punishment? Answer, lest you perish in the flames of anger!"

"Yes, we will do anything, if you will forgive us," sounded a trembling chorus of fear.

"Then get up from your knees, like brave men," commanded the machine.

And when the wretches stood up, the lights were suddenly turned on again. At the same moment, eight or ten voices of cylinders spoke from various parts of the cave, saying, "Promise, and you are saved; follow the white men, and victory is yours!" and like words of cheer.

"You must capture Banks and give him a taste of justice," said a voice; "and we want you to treat him as a devil, paying him in the way the old laws provide. Will you carry out our commands?"

"We will! we will!" exclaimed the chiefs in unison.

"Swanson, the great white chief, is a true tufa tola,"[1] said the cylinder; "and we demand that he be given all power over Atollians, as if he were of our own blood; for his heart is big and his head holds wisdom. He is too great a king for tattooing. He shall rule in place of all of you, making his own laws, and escaping the needles of the tattooers, which must be

[1] Most ancient and respected king, or most powerful and respected of rulers.

applied to all other kings to designate their blood."

"Does the great council of dead kings decree that I am to rule these people as their absolute king?" asked Swanson,—adding, "Please answer these native chiefs plainly, that there can be no doubt or misunderstanding as to my powers."

"Heed my answer, all Atollians!" said the impressive voice of command. "This white chief is to be head king and ruler over all men, whether chiefs or warriors. His word is to be your only law; and if you disobey him we will torture you in the bowels of the earth, with the bones of the dead. Remember this command, and keep it sacred to your last day! Obey us, and peace will be yours; disobey, and you shall not escape the day of wrath! Now let each chief depart for his home with a light heart, his mind free from fear! Follow your white tufa tola to the places of light and safety, with our blessings upon your heads! Our power of speech is growing faint, and we are needed by those

whose firesides are beyond the stars. Good by!"

There was no further speech, except Swanson's command for us to march from the cavern. He and I led the procession, followed by the chiefs. Randolph and the other whites marched behind the natives, and were the last to come from the gloom of the wood to the free acres near the shore. It was a joy to hear the surf and to see the mingling of dawn and dew at early morn; for the sky was pink and day was peeping from the rosy east.

When Swanson got my ear for a moment, he said, "Was n't it damned lucky that I laid in that big supply of phonographs the day we sailed?"

Then the picture of San Francisco's wharves rose before me, as if it had been yesterday, instead of years before, that I stood at the Mission Pier, wondering why a big stock of phonographs, labeled "TROPICAL WAX," comprised so mysterious a part of our cargo.

CHAPTER XV.

MY ISLAND EMPIRE.

IN looking over some verses of Psalms, a few days ago, my thoughts dwelt on the frailty of human life; and I read the words, "We spend our years as a tale that is told."

No man of middle age can recount the last ten years of his career without realizing how quickly the tale of life is told; how amazingly swift the noisy years of effort become the silent years of history. And I suppose it makes little difference to the Eternal Power that dwells at the heart of the universe where a man passes his days, if he but spend them well.

Looking back over the happy years I have lived in Atollia, I cannot wholly regret that fate removed me from the unequal and

prizeless battle that made life a burden in San Francisco. Of course there are times when I long for the roar of cities, the glamour of civilization, and the companionship of men of wide experience and culture; but for the most part I am content here, where life is largely a holiday, and where a man's mental attitude toward the universe and its problems is calm and impressive,—and largely introspective.

I cannot escape the feeling that I am chained here now, as much as if I had been banished from the country of my birth. In the first place, Swanson is old and feeble, having sailed to that part of life where the sunken reefs and shallows that spell death lie close at hand; and the people (natives, and whites as well) seem to look upon me as his logical successor,—king, president, leader. You see, I have been for some years the old Captain's right-hand man, and people think—I won't say how correct they are—that I have the wisdom to run the ship of state when Swanson shall be no more. Well, to leave a land where I have

been so happy, when duty and patriotism bid me remain, would be cowardly; so I long ago banished every thought of going away from the government I helped to create.

One thing more: If I may call you aside for a private word, there are reasons more personal (some might say more sentimental) that impel me to stick right here. If you are a family man you will grasp my meaning in a twinkling, for we are all proud of our own.

I should state that I have two daughters, —just sweet little babes,—and they are all the world to me. I have been long a home body; for God planted love of children in my heart. It was only yesterday that I held these little girls in my lap, playing with them in the bright sun that filtered through the palm leaves; and even the blinded sight of a father showed me that they were not pure white. In the strong light, there was a shade in them too dark for the blood of my fathers,—and in some countries the brown tint would make them

miserable. Now, when I think for a moment of taking them away from this land, where they are happy, and in harmony with their surroundings, I fly off on my mettle at the thought of what might occur; for they are half-castes, and they might be humiliated were the color-line drawn. Down here nobody thinks he is any better, —nobody anywhere is better; but if any slanderous tongue should ever call them "nigger," there would be one of the quickest and hardest fights on record. So, all in all, it is better for the country, and for all of us, that we live on here in peace.

A few years ago, the thought of a chief without the gay colors of tattooing was inconceivable to the native mind; for tattooing was a social and religious rite considered indispensable in the royal family, and faith in its efficacy was ancient and universal. Everybody believed it would drive away storms and give chiefs good luck in battle. We changed all that ever so long ago. Swanson is not tattooed, and his successor will remain white. I say this that you may

understand that I am not to be thought of as another such a looking object as Bill Banks.

For many years our colonists have been prosperous and happy. Everybody has the creature comforts, even many of the luxuries of life, as Swanson promised at the Seal Rock House. There are bicycles and all such modern conveniences to lighten the toil and increase the comforts of man; and in most respects we are not behind progressive communities of America in the inventions of the age. About once a year the *Rosalie* steals away, and returns laden with the goods and comforts of the period; and not a soul at the great marts where she takes on her cargoes ever dreams that she is anything but a sort of prosperous trading-vessel that plies between civilization and some wild archipelago,—but you know better.

If ever you should chance to visit us, however, you will doubtless notice that there are no phonographs in Atollia. Some day, things may change, but for the present

the government has a monopoly of the business of reproducing the human voice on the Edison cylinders. And our old cave of mystery (where we occasionally take the natives to revive old memories) is the only place of the kind in the islands.

I suppose you want to know what became of Banks; so it would not be fair to leave you in doubt concerning his career. His end was too terrible for detailed discussion; for the chiefs trapped him in a neck of wood, and he was put to death in the ancient manner of torture. They brought his head to us in corroboration of their story of his death. I confess his taking off was somewhat horrible,—but it was a trick, with many deaths at the end of it, that he would have played us, had he not been foiled soon after I first saw him in the forest. I suppose things had to go as they did, for every new country has its tragedies and conflicts.

When civilization and barbarism meet, something has to give way, and the readjustment leaves many graves along the

path. After all, there was something of "the survival of the fittest" philosophy in our supremacy; for, while I confess that our humbuggery in the cave was a great piece of falsehood, it was an artistic hoax, compared with the poor counterfeiting by which Banks tried to accomplish our undoing. While we were pretty rank impostors, you must not forget that our lives were at stake,—and I am willing to let the reader split ethical hairs and call us hard names, if such a pastime is pleasant.

As I write, the people of Atollia are enjoying that calm of spirit which comes in the sweet hours when man is unfettered by the fear of hunger and misfortune. You say it is the dreamy climate of purple skies that makes us happy? Not altogether. Even this glory of sunshine and surf would be no delight to men who pass their hats for the favors of the rich. It is our purpose to conduct this government so that it shall never become a cold-blooded commercial arena, where the masses forever grind in treadmills of hopeless toil, while millionaires

reap the harvests by reason of superior organization and capital,—aided by bad men and bad laws.

And now, on this last page, with the final drop of ink flowing from my pen, I can exclaim with the great Stevenson, that I know pleasure still, though not complete happiness, which never comes to mortal man,—"pleasure with a thousand faces, and none perfect, a thousand tongues all broken, a thousand hands, and all of them with scratching nails."


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